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Conservatives, and the Lost and the Silent Generations

The rising generation may find in conservative thought a way out of modern desolation.

DONALD BRANDON

DURING THE PAST YEAR, several writers discussed the difference between the generation of the 1920's and that of the present age. These essays almost uniformly lament the silence, indifference, and moral cowardice of young people who came to maturity during and after the Second World War. The apathy of the present generation, its conformity and conservatism, are contrasted with the cultural and intellectual flowering of the roaring twenties. The middle and old aged remnants of the famed Lost Generation cry out in anguish over the absence of any young giants to compare with Hemingway, Menckens, and the rest.

Even the articulate members of the present generation are critical. Taken together, the recent spate of articles gives the impression that America is on the road to ruin via tail-fin cars. Suburbia and the quest for security of "the organization man" are symbols of the present listless generation. The writing of the San Francisco group, we are told, is the only sign of life in the midst of a cultural and political wasteland. One has to turn to England to find "angry young men" comparable to the liberal heroes of the Lost Generation.

On the face of it, it might seem that little can be offered in rebuttal of these critics. The Lost Generation did produce a considerable body of creative literature

and political polemics, and the Silent Generation—well, has been silent. One could console the present generation by noting that it is not America alone which has failed to develop a vigorous post-war group of writers. As an English student of American letters, Marcus Cunliffe, says in his *Literature of the United States*: "Literature in present-day America. . . shows few very exciting trends America is of course not alone in its troubles. Whatever cultural advantages remain to Europe, its political and economic structures have been severely shaken. And in fact its authors—poets, novelists, dramatists—have on the whole shown no more signs than those of America that they have fresh things to say, or memorable ways of saying them. We should therefore beware of attributing the absence of greatness in current American literature to specifically American conditions."

On reflection, of course, it is small consolation to note that America is simply caught up in the general cultural and intellectual malaise of the Western world. The post-World War I generation had great problems to face, and it dealt with them at considerable length. Why hasn't the generation which came out of the Greater War done at least as well? At any rate, why is the Silent Generation silent? Why doesn't it say something, anything? Before examining the contemporary problem, let's go back to take a new look at the Lost Generation and its response to the milieu of the twenties. For it is all very well to note the quantitative fact of a renaissance after World War I, but what of the merit of the work of Hemingways and Menckens? What did the Lost Generation have to say?

The first World War marked the end of an era, and the beginning of a Time of Troubles which has not yet run its course. Before the outbreak of the Great War it had seemed to most, educated and uneducated, that liberalism, nationalism, and science had created an enduring Western system which would produce ever-increasing freedom and prosperity. And a general war among the Great Powers was unimaginable. As the authors of *This Age of Conflict* put it: "From time to time in the course of history human affairs reach an equilibrium, an equilibrium so stable as almost to give its contemporaries the illusion of permanence. The ages come to their sum and apex. Institutions, manners, conventions, the entire sociocultural complex seem fixed and final. . . . Such was 1914. Here too was an unquestioned, an almost unconsciously accepted stability; here was confidence and boundless optimism; here did man think of change only in terms of perpetual progress . . . there were very few who conceived of a state of affairs radically different from the existing. Marx, Nietzsche, and their prophetic brethren may have a little pricked the conscience of the world but hardly moved its deep complacency."

Four years, four seemingly endless years of trench warfare, shattered the optimism of the West. The Victorian era ended with the crash of the cannons on the Western front, and in the East the hitherto unshakable Czarist regime in Russia also came to an end. It was Armageddon to the people of the time.

And what of America? Previously able to develop its resources behind the shield of the Atlantic and Pacific, proud in its isolation from the ideological, class, and national conflicts of old Europe, the United States found itself engaged in the great struggle. It entered reluctantly, but when it did become involved, there was no mistaking the temper of the country: it would fight, and it would make this the war to end wars, the war to save the world for democracy. The Western world had been

halted in its upward movement; America was called upon to insure the triumph of the forces of justice, to restore the opportunity for further progress. But I need not recall in any detail the mood of the American people during the Great War, nor do more than mention the disillusionment, the rejection of Wilson and his dreams, and the return to normalcy which followed. The Big Red Scare, America Convalescent, The Revolution in Manners and Morals, Harding and the Scandals, Coolidge Prosperity, The Ballyhoo Years—the chapter-titles of Frederick Lewis Allen's *Only Yesterday* are sufficient to set the stage for the Revolt of the Highbrows.

A new generation grew up to find "all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken," Scott Fitzgerald wrote in *This Side of Paradise*. Hemingway stepped forward with his sensate lives of the disillusioned, Sinclair Lewis rocked the country with *Main Street*, and Henry L. Mencken mocked the idols of the business and Puritan civilization with his furious diatribes. Eugene O'Neill turned the American theatre from melodrama to realistic and symbolic consideration of the problems of real individuals. It was an age of literature and social commentary such as the nation had never witnessed before.

According to Allen, the general themes of the Lost Generation were as follows: "They believed in a greater degree of sexual freedom than had been permitted by the strict American code . . . they defied the enforcement of propriety by legislation . . . they were mostly, though not all, religious skeptics . . . they were united in a scorn of the great bourgeois majority which they held responsible for prohibition, censorship, fundamentalism, and other repressions . . . they took a particular pleasure in overturning the idols of the majority . . . they feared the effects upon themselves and upon American culture of mass production and the machine, and saw themselves as fighting at the last ditch for the right to be themselves in a civilization which was being leveled into

monotony . . . they believed also, these intellectuals, in scientific truth and the scientific method. . . ."

All in all, the Lost Generation engaged in a thorough attack on the ideals, conventions, and institutions of America in the 1920's, whether they went into "exile" abroad or stayed home and suffered. An extensive, at times artistically competent, and always dynamic body of literature was produced. There is nothing to match it in the present post-war era. But the amazing thing about those who condemn the Silent Generation by contrast is that they ignore the basic flaw in the work of the twenties which they praise. As Allen put it as long ago as 1931, the great renaissance was the work of disillusioned men who knew that they were disillusioned, and whose credo—freedom—was meaningless to them, for they had no values in terms of which to exercise liberty.

Have the critics from the Lost Generation writing today so smugly of what *they* produced in contrast to the much despised Silent Generation forgotten, in Allen's words, that "they could revolt against stupidity and mediocrity, they could derive a meager pleasure from regarding themselves with pity as members of a lost generation, but they could not find peace"? To put the matter most simply, while one can admire the outpouring of energy by the Lost Generation, it is impossible to applaud the *substance* of the writing of the great figures of the twenties. As Lovell Thompson writes, "It was indeed a great age of liberation. When the waters receded we had freedom from just about everything but freedom; but it was not, upon its noisy and chaotic surface, a constructive age. . . . Those who argue that the new generation lacks the spirit of the old are giving frivolous and vestigial advice indeed, and when we hear it we must listen reverently. It is the dying sigh of the Lost Generation—lost at last." The great debunkers, the prophets without a code who blitzed America in the twenties, violated a cardinal tenet of intellectual honesty:

having nothing positive to put forward, the Lost Generation should have been Silent.

It will be objected that the analysis overlooks several important factors: the bewilderment of America and of the West generally at the destruction of the old way of life, the crass materialism and narrow outlook against which the Lost Generation revolted, and the fact that artists like other humans are not rational automatons—whether they had a constructive philosophy or not, the writers of the twenties *had* to express themselves, to put forward—their lostness. All these points are valid, but they do not invalidate the judgment that on its philosophic merit the work of the Lost Generation must be found wanting.

The trouble of course lay in the nature of the liberal's mentality. As Thompson writes, "The old-fashioned liberal was—perhaps you can still say he is—a mythical intellectual of intense good will with an *absolutely open mind*" [*italics mine*]. Having "open minds," it is little wonder that the old-fashioned liberals filled them by accepting "unflinchingly, the great and troublous ideas of our time," Marxism, Freudianism, Fascism, and the notion that the scientific method is the only way to establish truth. If one will not accept the contention that all these ideas were demonstrably false in their undiluted forms in the twenties, then it seems impossible to deny that experience and intellectual criticism have rendered these "great and troublous ideas" patently absurd in the fifties.

Despite the sympathy which we may rightly feel for the Lost Generation in its predicament following the Great War, it remains necessary to say that the literary output of the liberals was, however energetic and sincere, destructive, and that it sowed the seeds of trouble in the decades which followed—including the proletarian literature and political treason of the Thirties. The Lost Generation has apparently forgotten "the frustrated hopes that followed the war, the aching disillusionment of the hard-boiled era, its oily scandals,

its spiritual paralysis, the harshness of its gaiety; they would talk about the good old days. . . ." (Allen, *Only Yesterday*).

But the last statement requires modification, for it seems that the great figures of the Lost Generation have not forgotten. It is only the secondary writers who complain of the Silent and praise the work of the Lost Generation. For as Robert Spiller says in *The Cycle of American Literature*, "Faulkner's turn to religious allegory was not an isolated event. Hemingway's Old Man was in many ways a fisher of men, Robert Frost's Masques of Reason and Mercy used the stories of Job and Jonah, O'Neill's Iceman was but Death demanding his reckoning, and T. S. Eliot's late verse tragicomedies were all thinly disguised religious debates. After 1945 leading writers of the older generation were preparing to face something larger than their own individual deaths, there was the unmistakable tone of Judgment Day for an era in their common symbolism and skeptical otherworldliness." Can it be said that, after all, you can go home again? And that the giants of the Lost Generation have atoned for much of their earlier work and groped their way back to the gates of the classical Western tradition?

But what of the Silent Generation? If we may criticize the Lost Generation for its lostness, it remains to discuss the alleged sins of the present generation of suburbanites. Why has there been no creative response to the second postwar era on the part of the younger generation? After all, there has been a comparable Red Scare, bigger perhaps than that of the twenties, juvenile (and adult) delinquency is rampant, we have had five-percenter, mink coat, deep freeze, and other larger scandals, the Republic suffers from (in Walter Lippmann's words) "prosperity acting as a narcotic, with Philistinism and McCarthyism rampant," and Madison Avenue and the Hidden Persuaders make the ballyhoo artists of the twenties look like hicks by comparison. Where is the revolt of the Highbrows, or even of the Middlebrows?

It is actually very easy to account for the difference between the Lost Generation and the Silent Generation. Whereas the Lost Generation came to maturity prior to or at the beginning of the Decline of the West, the present generation was reared during the Great Depression, and had maturity thrust upon it by the Second World War. There were no Great Expectations in the hearts and minds of the boys who went off to fight World War II, there were no illusions of grandeur, nor did the girls who stayed home really hope for anything more than the return of their sweethearts, husbands and brothers. The Lost Generation had successfully undermined the traditions and old certainties of America, and events did whatever else may have been required to eradicate normal aspirations and hopes.

It is really little wonder that the Silent Generation has found America basically good, for it participated in the military destruction of patently evil Fascist systems, and was soon made aware of the equally evil and even greater menace of Soviet and international Communism. Most returned from the war with the determination to find a place for themselves in society, to raise a family, to enjoy the private life they had dreamed about in the service—the one thing which sustained them and made the whole effort really worthwhile. As Podhoretz has said, "The trick for the post-war generation was not to carp at life like a petulant adolescent, but rather to begin regarding life with respect for its complexity and its drama, and to get down to the business of adult living as quickly as possible. And get down to business the young generation did. A great many married early; most made decisive commitments to modest careers; they cultivated an interest in food, clothes, furniture, manners—these being elements of the 'richness' of life that the generation of the '30's had deprived itself of."

While there are some professional liberals among the present generation (and these are the non-Silent ones), to most of

those who returned from the war with some awareness of cultural and intellectual things "contemporary liberalism was [seen] as a conglomeration of attitudes suitable only to the naive, the inexperienced, the callow, the rash—in short, the immature. . . . one was living in a world of severely limited possibilities, balanced precariously on the edge of an apocalypse. In such a world there was very little one could know, very little one could do." The only "expatriates" among the present generation are in the Foreign Service—serving the Government, not criticizing it, waiting anxiously for every home leave, and wishing they could find a job in America and settle down.

For most of the Silent Generation, what they have is good enough, and their only real fear stems from the Bombs. Nuclear war may wipe out everything—they're not worried about the Republicans, but about the Russians taking it away. There remains, however, after all that has been said, a legitimate complaint about the behavior and the Silence of the present generation—and about America in the fifties. Although the postwar generation has been emphatically right about the goodness of America as opposed to socialist and totalitarian systems, has rediscovered such traditional values as the family and religion (of a sort), there is no denying the malaise in both the great and lively arts, the conformity and complacency, the distrust of ideas and of the eggheads.

While there has been constructive effort in private life, there has been resignation in the sphere of public duty and apathy toward cultural and intellectual pursuits. One must agree with Max Lerner that a "moral interregnum" exists in America, in which old codes have collapsed and new ones have not yet arrived to take their place. "America has become in many ways a sensual and sexual society, but with a curious blend of blatancy and deviousness. . . . America has come to stress sex as much as any civilization since Rome" (*America as a Civilization*). While the

work of the Lost Generation in the area of politics has been discarded, the effects of the roaring twenties linger on in the private and cultural spheres. The "religious revival" can not withstand serious scrutiny; it is hard to deny that the flight to religion for peace of mind or soul, for the acquisition of The Power of Positive Thinking, is really only a gesture, a half-hearted visit to "drive-in churches," in Peter Viereck's striking phrase (*The Unadjusted Man*).

While there is much that is wholesome in the thought and actions of the Silent Generation, and it is absurd to say—as does Podhoretz—that they "know nothing, stand for nothing, believe in nothing," it is nevertheless true that they have tolerated and even supported a good deal of political nonsense in the postwar decade, that they have spurned pursuits larger than canasta and barbecue parties, and that they are Silent. It is hard to be as sanguine as Eric Goldman regarding the American acceptance of the middle way: a mixed economy at home and commitment to responsibilities abroad (*The Crucial Decade*).

There is, in fact, a dangerous intellectual and cultural vacuum—what basic principles, what tradition, will sustain this moderation in the face of inevitable hazards to come? If it is true that "creeping conservatism" rather than "creeping socialism" is the grand trend of our times, and there is every reason to believe that the trend will continue for some years to come, it is also true that "the men brought to power by the conservative revival will never discharge the mission that history has thrust upon them until they learn a great deal more than they now appear to know about the nature, logic, and principles of conservatism" (Clinton Rossiter, *Conservatism in America*). The political sobriety of the younger generation and of America as a whole is the result of an instinctive reaction to experience rather than of a conscious examination of the contemporary scene in terms of basic principles, and America has shown itself subject to fits of political inebriation dur-

ing the past decade because of the absence of an operative conservative tradition. Moreover, literary life is dominated by "open-minded" liberals who give us *The Young Lions*, *The Naked and the Dead*, *From Here to Eternity*, and it is not reassuring to know that J. D. Salinger's adolescent exercises are the most appealing to the college generation.

If the Silent Generation is to find an intellectual basis for its conservatism, it is to be hoped that the work of the New Conservatives will be more widely disseminated and discussed. For in the writings of these men can be found the rediscovery of the Christian-humanist tradition and its application to the problems of the present. As Rossiter summarizes them, "the constant themes in these writings are: the universal moral order supported and sanctioned by organized religion; the imperfect nature of man; the conservative mission of education; the inseparability of liberty and property; the excellence of aristocracy, or at least of the aristocratic spirit; the limited reach of reason and consequent importance of traditions and institutions; the necessity of diffusing power; the equilibrium of rights and responsibilities; the primacy of the community; the beauties of stability and order; the final dignity and inviolability of the human personality." The New Conservatives, whether "Southern agrarian, Catholic or [sic!] intellectual, are together distinguished from other conservatives by their obstinate refusal to delight in the 'progress' of industrialism or to make peace with the 'shallow optimism', 'selfish individualism', and 'hedonistic materialism' of the scheme of values this progress has sustained."

It is not alone in the spheres of public and private duty that the New Conservatives have much to offer the younger generation and America. As Spiller says, "the voices of the new writers seemed to be calling for values, standards, and security rather than for further upheaval and change. They seemed older and wiser than their elders. . . . they seemed at the mid-

point of the century to be waiting for a leadership that could point direction and guide the literature of the free world into further cycles of fulfillment." Given the necessary degree of imagination and ability on the part of writers, the New Conservatism provides the outlook required for a *constructive* revival of letters.

In his review of Jack Kerouac's *On The Road*, Gilbert Millstein wrote: "The Beat Generation' was born disillusioned; it takes for granted the imminence of war, the barrenness of politics and the hostility of the rest of society. It is not even impressed by (although it never pretends to scorn) material well-being (as distinguished from Materialism). It does not know what refuge it is seeking, but it is seeking." While most of the Silent Generation doubtless feels less deeply than the San Francisco School the intellectual and political issues of our time, it is probably true that underneath the not so calm exteriors of the exurbanites lies something of Kerouac's concern. But the San Francisco group cannot point the way for the present generation, for its members are as lost as the Lost Generation ever was.

Nor will it do to import or learn from the "angry young men" in Britain, for of them it can truly be said that they "know nothing, stand for nothing, believe in nothing." There is no doubt an element of truth in Thompson's requiem for the Lost Generation: "Perhaps the Jazz Age was a great age after all, but if it was we have lost sight of its greatest accomplishment. It was the age that has given us the new generation of today—wiser, quieter, perhaps stronger, and certainly a lot handsomer [?] than the old Lost Generation." Nevertheless, the Silent Generation needs an intellectual basis for its political conservatism. And should it discover the New Conservatism, it is also possible that it will break its silence and inaugurate a positive literary era which will match that of the Lost Generation in energy and surpass it in ethical and aesthetic quality.

Without religious sanction, liberty cannot long be maintained in the civil social order.

Of Human Freedom

RAYMOND ENGLISH

1. The Meaning of Freedom

ALTHOUGH IT RECEIVES much adulatory lip-service, freedom has been and is at a discount in the twentieth century. To illustrate this proposition would be less difficult than tedious. I intend, therefore, to take the proposition for granted and to inquire whether the trouble lies not so much in the impracticability of freedom itself, or in the illiberal march of events, as in men's intellectual failure to comprehend this most powerful of all ideals, and, in particular, in a misunderstanding arising out of a long course of the naïvetes of radical liberalism. I shall engage in the unfashionable pursuit of definition, making the unfashionable assumption that moral values are real. This is a procedure deprecated even by some conservative thinkers.

When I see the spirit of liberty in action, I see a strong principle at work; and this, for a while, is all I can possibly know of it. . . . The effect of liberty to individuals is, that they may do what they please: we ought to see what it will please them to do, before we risk congratulations, which may be soon turned into complaints. Prudence would dictate this in the case of separate

insulated private men; but liberty, when men act in bodies, is power. Considerate people, before they declare themselves, will observe the use which is made of power. . . .¹

So Burke wrote, with his characteristic insistence on circumstances rather than generalities in politics. Yet his position might be rephrased as follows: "The mere claim that a man or group of men is free is meaningless; the objective proof of freedom lies in the behavior of the person or persons under consideration, for freedom is a moral value and a free man or a free society is a moral fact, not a matter of opinion, appearance or sentiment."

Important to the present discussion is the historic truth that freedom, when misunderstood, has always proved maleficent and self-destructive. The apologists of liberalism like to assume that liberty was invented by radical liberal thinkers. There is some truth in the claim, if by "liberty" we understand those one-sided or partial versions of freedom associated with the Enlightenment and Jacobinism and Utilitarianism. It is, however, important to recall that among those who exalted the ideal of freedom were Socrates, Plato, Cicero, Saint

Paul, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Hooker, Bunyan, Burke, Hegel, George Washington, John Adams and Lord Acton, as well as Pericles, the Gracchi, Lilburne, Locke, Voltaire, Rousseau, Paine, Jefferson, Robespierre, J. S. Mill and Marx. It is worth noting, too, that the former group were all concerned to insist that freedom was dangerously easy to misunderstand and misuse. Although freedom itself is integral there are two vastly different ways of regarding it: the first, idealistic and moral, the second, physical and materialistic; the first, perceiving the whole nature of freedom, the second seeing only its external symptom, the absence of restraint. The latter view, while not entirely false, is futile and indeed fatal unless supported and controlled by the former.

This assertion may be verified by a simple illustration. Moral freedom implies at the very least that a man is free in proportion to the control which his reasoning powers and his conscience exercise over his physical impulses and his short-sighted sensual desires. We think a child is growing up as it learns to "look" before running across the road, or to respect the feelings of others, or not to wander and get lost under the impulse of the first distracting notion that enters its wayward little brain. As we recognize its acquisition of rational self-control, we grant it physical freedom — the freedom to go out alone, the freedom to spend its own pennies, the freedom to "stay up" when there are guests. But the moral freedom which is self-government must develop before the grant of physical freedom; if it does not, there will be sadness and even heartbreak for child or parents or probably both. Thus, to think of freedom merely in terms of the absence of physical restraints upon the individual is tragic folly: this form of freedom can never be good save as the corollary of moral and intellectual freedom.

Clearly, men are not all free in the primary sense, and those who are free in this sense are not free to an equal extent. The

difference is not one of race or culture or education or wealth: it is simply a moral difference. To understand this is to perceive why and how people lose freedom in every sense of the word and the topsy-turviness of mere declarations of the "natural rights of man." It is an outrage of human intelligence to suggest that the revolutionary terrorist Robespierre or the military despot Napoleon or the brutal homicide Stalin were either free or capable of freedom under the circumstances in which they flourished; yet all three were products of enthusiastic movements for freedom. Such, too, will be the products of all ideologies which aim at the secondary goal of physical freedom without achieving the first and truly important end of moral freedom. "The necessity for external government to man is in an inverse ratio to the vigor of his self-government. Where the last is most complete, the first is least wanted. Hence, the more virtue, the more liberty."²

The definition of freedom as self-government is allied to the ethical theory of self-realization associated with idealist thought. It has been attacked by liberals like Hobhouse and materialists like Hobbes as a piece of philosophical trickery or "double-think." According to critics nourished on a partial theory of freedom, the full definition means that men will be given physical (or political) freedom only on condition that they have become robots in mental strait-jackets incapable of "using" freedom: and this, they say, is the age-old device of despotism in church and state, and its modern name is thought-control or brain-washing.

Undoubtedly the concept of moral freedom can be twisted to evil uses, but a consideration of possible alternative definitions of freedom will drive us back to the moral concept. Suppose we examine the "common-sense" view that freedom is the absence of restraint (external and internal). Then a free man is one who thinks and acts as he feels like thinking and acting, who follows his desires, knows what he

wants and gets it. Presumably, a selfish man is more likely to be free than the man who troubles about the feelings and needs of others. A drug-addict peddling narcotics for a few hours a week in order to obtain a supply of dope to keep himself happy must be immeasurably freer than, for example, the President of the United States, harassed and tied by a thousand calls of duty. Since the dope-peddler is liable to arrest, it might be more convincing to set against the President of the United States the not very hypothetical case of a rich man leading a lazy, selfish and vicious life. The example of the criminal, however, has this advantage: it forces us to face the question whether or not laws are restraints on freedom. "Government and law, in their very essence, consist of restrictions on freedom, and freedom is the greatest of political goods."³

Consequently, the more a man succeeds in dodging the laws, the freer he will be. Then a successful racketeer is the outstanding example of a free man. Hobbes, who defined freedom as the absence of restraint, came to the honest conclusion that it was, socially and politically, undesirable and impossible. The doctrinaire acceptance by modern socialists of unlimited bureaucratic control is doubtless the result of a comparable acquiescence in the logical consequences of the negative definition of freedom as the absence of restraint.

A more satisfactory definition asserts that the essence of freedom is the possibility of making a choice. Yet the logical consequence of equating freedom with range of choice is disturbing: it implies, surely, that a healthy person is freer than a cripple, or a millionaire than a pauper. Hence arises the economic interpretation of freedom, found in extreme forms in the writings of Marx and Lenin, according to whom there can be no freedom for men in general until all economic, educational and social inequalities have been abolished. A more subtle version of the notion that freedom increases with the area of choice is found in the argument that whatever a

man does because he cannot help it is an unfree act. Thus, if our parents have instilled certain patterns of behavior so deeply in us that certain conduct becomes habitual and compulsive, our behavior is to that extent not free: then a man who cannot help being well-mannered is less free than an unpredictable boor whose social conduct varies with his mood and temper. Many people (following John Stuart Mill) equate "individuality" and "freedom" with eccentricity, nonconformity, and the courage or insensibility which enables a man to shock his acquaintances and community. It seems obvious that a man who is loyal and hard-working merely because he has been trained from childhood in a narrow and semi-automatic discipline is not free. This is plausible, yet it seems to leave some vital factor out. Can we really accept a standard which suggests that the virtuous well-mannered man who respects the conventional decencies of society is *necessarily* less free than the licentious, impudent nonconformist? Do we actually model our educational system and our respect of persons upon so naïve a view?

We may note that even if the possibility of making a choice between two or more courses of behavior is indispensable to freedom, the mere act of choosing does not in itself make the chooser free. If it did, then the man who made an immoral choice would be as free as the man who made the moral one: the man who ran away in the battle, the man who gave way to his passions, the man who failed to study for his examination would be as free as the man who stood by his gun, who checked his appetite or who exercised the self-control necessary to master his subject. It may be argued that the distinction between these hypothetical cases is not between freedom and unfreedom but between honor and dishonor, right and wrong, or intelligence and stupidity. Conceivably freedom is simply limited to providing choices, and has nothing to do with the actual decision made. Even on its own grounds this argument can be shown to be self-defeating;

because every time a man makes the wrong choice in a "free" situation he reduces his opportunity to make choices in the future. If a man once gives way to passion, his chances of choosing between passionate and rational action in the future will (unless he is punished) be reduced. If a man fails his examination through sloth, he may have eliminated forever his opportunity to choose certain careers. In other words, the correct decisions in a situation of choice appear in practice to extend and enhance one's ability to continue to exercise choice, whereas the wrong decisions will limit that ability. There is apparently always one choice which will extend freedom for oneself and for others, and always one or more choices which will narrow the future possibility of freedom. When the German people gave the Nazis a plurality in the Reichstag in November 1932, and again in March 1933, they were, if freedom means the ability to make a choice, exercising freedom; but if freedom means making a choice that will maintain or extend the possibility of future choices, then the German people were acting like slaves not free men.

2. Christian Freedom

The relationship of freedom to the possibility of making a choice leads to the brink of what Gibbon sarcastically called "the dark abyss of grace, predestination, free will and original sin," or modern sociologists "historical determinism", "childhood conditioning", "Behaviorism", "inner-or-other directedness" and so forth. Plausible as is the theory that freedom depends on the ability to choose, the fact is that we can never prove that men are ever really able to exercise this faculty. In the case of the German elections of 1932-33 it is arguable that the result was inevitable: that a myriad of causes made the rise of Hitler utterly ineluctable. Or, in the case of a young man who fails his examinations, it is possible that heredity, family-background, previous education, psychological conditioning and so on all con-

spired to make any other result at that particular phase of his life impossible. For the Christian the deadlock presents itself in terms of original sin and predestination: if the mercy of God and the grace of Christ can alone save us, is it not spiritual insolence to imagine that we are ever in a position to choose freely of our own will? Sociological determinism and submission to the Will of God seem to join in an unexpected alliance. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

The Xth and XVIIth Articles of Religion are subtle but explicit. Article X, *Of Free Will*:

The condition of Man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God. Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God without the Grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

Article XVII, *Of Predestination and Election*, is too long to be quoted in full, but it is an emphatic if complex assertion of the doctrine:

Predestination to Life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. . . .

How far we are required to subscribe to these articles is a question largely neglected. Doctor Johnson, who was morbidly sensitive about death and damnation, could not bring himself to accept predestination, and when Boswell pointed to the thirty-nine articles remarked: "Why, yes, Sir,

predestination was a part of the clamour of the times, so it is mentioned in our articles, but with as little positiveness as could be."

This at least seems true: the attempt to deny predestination converts Christianity into either a vague and rationalistically sentimental humanitarianism or a system of remedial rituals dispensed by a priesthood to a disciplined and dependent flock. Yet the doctrine has repelled many good men: for example, George Santayana, who once referred to the "brutality and sycophancy" of parts of Augustine's writings, and Bishop Gore, who felt that "the logical implication [of divine predestination] . . . did no doubt cut at the roots of any real sense of moral responsibility."⁴ Predestination is, perhaps, acceptable only if we admit that we cannot fully understand it: that it is only man's narrow view of a vast plan of Almighty God. Bishop Beveridge, speaking of Article XVII, said: "a cocklefish may as soon crowd the ocean into its narrow shell, as vain man ever comprehend the decrees of God."⁵

Moreover, it is necessary to realize that predestination does not cancel the possibility of free will; on the contrary, it makes free will possible. This point is implicit in the above Articles, and appears to be the position adopted by Saints Augustine and Thomas Aquinas and Richard Hooker. Coleridge, much exercised by this question, makes the same point, and suggests that the proof of a Christian's election by grace will in fact be his possession of freedom of will, shown in his energy in good works. Thus Coleridge distinguishes between "Necessitarianism", as developed by the New England theologians such as Jonathan Edwards, and the correct view of, for example, Luther:

Luther considered the pretensions to free-will boastful, and better suited to the "budge doctors of the Stoic Fur," than to preachers of the Gospel, whose great theme is the redemption of the will from slavery; the restoration of the

will to perfect freedom being the end and consummation of the redemptive process. . . . The freedom of a finite will [is] possible under this condition only, that it has become one with the will of God.⁶

In the earliest detailed exposition of the doctrine we find:

We are neither compelled to leave our freedom of will by retaining God's foreknowledge, nor by holding our will's freedom to deny God's foreknowledge. ⁷

Bishop Gore, having rejected predestination, adds this statement:

The only escape from such slavery [to the flesh] is by surrender to the higher will of God. Man is bound to lose his balanced independence, in the one direction to his destruction, or in the other to his redemption and real self-realization. God's service is the only real freedom.⁸

Although, therefore, a superficial glance suggests that Christian doctrine, like extreme forms of sociological or psychological determinism, denies the possibility of human freedom, this conclusion is palpably wrong. Freedom is neither ignored nor condemned in the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, or the writings of the great theologians. Moreover, the history of Christendom and of Western civilization provides evidence of a probable connection between Christianity and the practical achievement of what we call loosely political and social freedom. It is worth remarking that "liberal" movements in the modern world can be divided into those deeply tinged with Protestant Christian belief and learning and those which have been dominated by secularism. Among the former are the revolt of the Netherlands, the English Civil War and Revolution of 1688 and the American Revolution; among the latter, the French and Bolshevik Revolutions. By and large, the former brought or extended constitutional free government,

while the latter brought anarchy, terror, and their consequence, despotism. (The Latin American wars of independence, and revolutionary movements in Central Europe and Spain are hard to classify.) The Christian doctrine of political resistance is based on the concept of divine, natural and human law; it defines a tyrannical government as one which breaks such laws, and it will justify resistance, passive or active, only on this firmly definable constitutional ground. The secular liberal theory of political revolution is diametrically opposed to this point of view: it asserts the natural right of all men to decide for themselves what laws and government they will have, and so produces a situation of anarchic competing factions whose struggles lead to the tyranny of one surviving faction. Thus the secular theory of revolution gives birth to tyrannical regimes flouting the Laws of God and Nature, and so produces situations justifying resistance according to Christian principles.

If Christianity favors freedom, and if the definitions of freedom in terms of doing what we like or of exercising choice do not fit the Christian scheme of things, then we have to discover a more realistic definition. Such a definition may not be far removed from the definition achieved by "virtuous pagans" like Plato or Cicero. As a matter of fact, we shall not need to look further than the Collect for Peace in the service of Morning Prayer: "O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom. . . ."

This, surely, is the definition for which we seek. It removes the stumbling blocks which have beset our argument so far. For now, freedom is not doing what we please (or imagine that we please) but what pleases God; nor is it being loyal and hard-working and law-abiding, without specifying the object of our loyalty and work; nor is it merely making a choice, but making the right choice always — a right choice which cannot be our own

private, independent, arbitrary choice, but only and by definition the choice imposed by God's will.

It has been pointed out (to the present writer by his colleague, Professor Richard G. Salomon) that the phrase "whose service is perfect freedom" is a total alteration of the Latin original — *Quem servare est regnare* — "Whom to serve is to reign." The transmutation is significant; the definition of freedom as the service of God is merely a variation on the theme which occurs again and again in the New Testament: "and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (II Cor. 3:17.) In the Gospel of St. John, Jesus says:

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (John, 8: 32-36.)

Again, the Epistle of St. James speaks of "the perfect law of liberty" (1:25 and 2:12); and St. Paul writes to the Romans:

. . . the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (Rom. 8:21);

and to the Galatians:

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (Gal. 5:1.)

There would be no need to recite these passages were it not uncomfortably evident that a very different concept of freedom from this is popularly accepted in the western world (and in other parts of the world) today. The Christian idea of freedom does not, however, imply either that

we can shrug our shoulders and assume that God's will and our freedom will be implemented without further desperate concern on our part, or that we can assume — on the grounds that we are sincere Christians — that the choices we make are necessarily pleasing to God. Neither apathetic resignation nor fanatical self-righteousness are compatible with freedom. The former is clearly a procedure which hands the world over to the devil. The latter leads to inquisitorial tyranny and/or to the heresy of antinomianism, that is to say, the assumption that the elect of God are above the law. Christians have again and again fallen into both these sins, which are indeed the opposite sides of the same coin, and equally the consequence of men's assuming that they have somehow acquired an infallible acquaintance with God's will. At the outset of Christian history St. Paul had to rebuke the Thessalonian and Corinthian Churches for antinomian tendencies; and during the Reformation both Luther and Calvin were compelled to condemn similar developments, which reached an extreme form in the Anabaptist movement. The abomination of inquisitorial persecution is merely antinomianism (arbitrariness) enforced by irresistible power, and this, too, the Church has committed occasionally. Liberty must be under law, and for Christians the law itself is "the perfect law of liberty", which is the hardest of all laws to follow.

The Christian definition of freedom, once understood and adopted, puts a man on his mettle and drives him to more conscientious efforts to be truly himself and truly free than any other concept of freedom could do. This phenomenon is capable of psychological explanation, an example of which may be found in a brilliant passage on Pelagius and St. Augustine in R. G. Collingwood's volume on Roman Britain in the *Oxford History of England*:

Augustine was teaching his doctrine of grace: how the power to do great things that flows outward from the human will

is a power not originating in that will itself, but flowing through it, using it as vehicle and means of expression, its source being God, and man's power being then greatest when he is most aware of himself as the open channel through which God's power flows into the world. . . . To [Pelagius], such mysticism was the negation of human freedom, and a belief in it must sap the will to self-discipline and self-improvement upon which alone man could base a vigorous practical life. Yet Augustine, the fiery man of action, knew more about the human will than Pelagius, the reserved and dreamy wanderer. It was the ineffective, unpractical man who insisted on the freedom of the will; the strong man knew that such insistence was the unconscious betrayal of inner weakness. Augustine was right: a determinism of the kind which he preached is indispensable to sound ethical doctrine. Pelagius in opposing it was expressing in terms of philosophical thought the same paralysis of will that his countrymen [the Romanized Britons] were revealing in action: Augustine's thought, still today dominating civilization like a colossus, expressed the demonic energy of the early Christian mind, conscious of itself as drawing on stores of energy that were not finite, like the human personality, but infinite.⁹

The contrast between the two great antithetical concepts of freedom could scarcely be drawn more emphatically than in this passage, and their psychological and personal consequences could not be more clearly indicated. The heretical view of freedom, the assumption that it means the independent choices made by the private and self-sufficient wills of individuals, leads to the demoralization of the person and the paralysis of decision in a society, whereas the concept of freedom as service to eternal and infinite purposes and laws produces firmness, self-confidence and ex-

pansion of energy in individuals and communities. This is a paradox and a mystery, like all the most vital truths.

3. *Christian Freedom and Secular Crisis*

Predestination — salvation by grace — justification by faith: these words try to describe the mysterious heart of Christianity. These doctrines provide a glimmer of an intellectual explanation of the enormous security and energy and consciousness of freedom which the Christian — when he is most completely Christian — knows. They shadow forth vaguely the facts of man's weakness and finite personality and his inescapable awareness of his own imperfection; they hint at ways in which he can be released from the bondage of these fears. They carry us beyond the concept of moral freedom to something greater yet: the concept of spiritual freedom, which implies not only that the reason and conscience are in control of the passions and appetites, but that reason itself is directed by the soul which has achieved harmony with eternal goodness.

When Christians and the Church lose sight of these profundities the power and the glory of God depart from them. Then, sooner or later, other religions or pseudo-religions will seize upon the Christian concept of predestination and men and women who ought to have discovered their freedom in Christianity will try to find it elsewhere. The Church's loss of inner spiritual meaning was the fundamental cause of the Reformation, while the later schisms of dissent and progressively fissiparous sectarianism were the repeated consequences of the repeated failure of organized Christianity to understand the mystery of its own power to liberate men and women. Similarly, when the Church and secular liberalism became alike dry, formal and "rationalistic" in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, many brilliant minds turned to Hegelianism, which was a species of theology, while less intellectual but equally noble minds turned to nationalism, pure and simple. Now Hegelianism

finds freedom in the attainment of harmony with the inexorable purpose of the "World-Spirit" (that is, the Mind of God working through history), and nationalism is a device whereby the individual finds freedom and power by losing himself in the greater life and immortal and transcendent purposes of his nation. Finally, we may note how a similar borrowing of the central mystery of Christianity has formed in our own time the tragically attractive appeal of Marxist Communism to sensitive and sincere idealists: for Marxism, as a faith and doctrine, fills its adherents with the tremendous idea that they are part of a predetermined and beneficent process of struggle which will bring heaven down to earth. So the Communist Parties in Western nations have been possessed of the martyr spirit and the inner discipline and the feeling of power which are far more appropriate to and would have been infinitely more firmly founded in the Church. If the Church forgets its own reality, it becomes a moribund society of politely conventional people while those idealistic persons who demand the sureness and purpose which alone give freedom to imperfect human beings will turn after strange gods.

The relevance of the Christian concept of freedom to the crisis of our civilization becomes obvious. In a recent book, *The Lonely Crowd*, David Riesman described the loss of individuality and the dominance of a characteristic which he calls "other directedness" in contemporary American society. We are, he suggests, prone to base our conduct and standards of value on the passing fashion in our "peer-group", whatever it may be. A political consequence of this is the loss of drive and purpose in society as a whole: for not only do we lack unifying and consistent purpose, not only do we fail to find and follow real leaders, but the groups of which society is composed form themselves into effective "veto-groups" capable of defending the right of each group to go its own way, or do "what it pleases", and so of blocking

broad and positive social action. The consequences of the heretical, Pelagian concept of freedom are visible in the sad picture which Mr. Riesman elaborates.

Mr. Riesman's remedy for the situation lies in the conscious development of what he calls "autonomous" characters, that is to say, men and women who have each a law of their own which they will obey without concerning themselves about the opinions and fads of their "peer-group." The idea is good. The autonomous man has always been the Christian ideal; for autonomous means "self-legislating" or, perhaps better, "self-policing." But for the Christian there is one absolute code of laws — the code of Divine and Natural Law — and thus each autonomous Christian person is by definition striving to fulfill in his own life the great law which embraces all good men. Mr. Riesman's autonomous characters are not, however, of this central and normative type, but rather eccentrics whose affinities are with Pelagius and John Stuart Mill; so that his remedy appears to be merely an extension of aimless, negative freedom (which is not freedom at all.)

We thus come face to face with the vital significance of a revived understanding of the true meaning of freedom in the contemporary world. Gradually, though not always insidiously, a false concept of freedom has crept into the heart of Western, Christian civilization. This concept is the anarchic, lawless, pretendedly individualist view which sees each man and woman as a bundle of appetites, desires and self-assertiveness, possessed of certain absolute "rights" merely by virtue of being born. The Fatherhood of God and the immortality of souls, which formed the foundation for the Christian concept of human freedom, and posited a central norm of faith, standards and right reason, have ceased to be generally understood in the era of secular liberalism. Freedom, instead of a positive and purposive ideal and fact, bound up with men's awareness of the inevitable death of the body and the possible sur-

vival of the soul, has tended to become a negative, ephemeral, divisive and self-defeating principle aimed at the impossible and evil goal of giving everyone full physical satisfaction during his earthly existence. It is not without significance that Bernard Shaw concluded in *Back to Methuselah* that men could achieve the satisfaction which his principles demanded only if they conquered physical death; nor is it irrelevant that Karl Marx and Lenin postponed the possibility of freedom (according to their definition) until the achievement of an insipid heaven on earth called "the higher phase of communist society". Such conclusions are the logical outcome of the heretical definition of freedom, and we must respect the honesty of these men who, rejecting the immortality of the soul, recognized the fantastic lengths to which their tragic assumptions led.

Not all of us are capable of such intellectual honesty. We want to have the cozy pleasure of the theory that freedom is doing as we please, even while we know that death may come to us at any moment. If we do not believe in immortality, it is no doubt some small comfort to imagine that we are trying to have "a good time while it lasts"; yet even this small comfort will bring us close to mad anxiety if we think about it for more than a minute or two. If, on the other hand, we believe in the survival of the soul, we must admit that we are absurdly silly to imagine that the freedom to do as we please and engage in "the pursuit of happiness" (in the sense in which the mean sensual man understands the phrase) is worth having.

Because man is conscious of death (which is also sin) — conscious naggingly, nervously, resentfully and wearily from the age of three or four — he reaches out beyond this life. The turning point in a man's life often occurs when he faces maturely and calmly the fact of physical death: this is demonstrated in Lionel Trilling's novel, *The Middle of the Journey*, which is concerned with the conversion of

intellectuals from materialistic radicalism (Marxism, Stalinism, and so forth). Towards the end of the book, the ex-Communist discusses the case of a drunkard who caused the death of his own child. He draws a contrast between the Christian view of human freedom and the sentimental materialistic view:

I believe that Duck Caldwell — like you or me or any one of us — is wholly responsible for his acts. Wholly. And for eternity, for everlasting. That is what gives him value in my eyes — his eternal, everlasting responsibility. His every act, to me, involves the whole universe. And when it breaks the moral law of the whole universe, I consider that his punishment might be infinite, everlasting. And yet in my system there is one thing that yours lacks. In my system, although there is never-ending responsibility, there is such a thing as mercy. . . . And so you and I stand opposed. For you — no responsibility for the individual, but no forgiveness. For me — ultimate, absolute responsibility for the individual, but mercy. Absolute responsibility: it is the only way that men can keep their value, can be thought of as other than mere *things* Social causes, environment, education — do you think that they really make a difference between one human soul and another? In the eyes of God are such differences of any meaning at all?¹⁰

This is a hard saying to most of us; for the edges of our moral perceptions have been dulled by a pulpy-soft intellectual environment. Meanwhile the political consequences of our errors have become increasingly evident. The anarchic tendencies of the false view of freedom have produced in the French Revolution and the Bolshevik Revolution as well as in many less lurid events the usual consequence of anarchy, to wit, tyranny. The logic of this development is very simple. If freedom implies doing what you please and making arbitrary

choices, then anyone who insists that there are moral absolute standards and eternal laws is the enemy of freedom. (The Church, therefore, is the enemy of freedom.) And yet, it becomes clear that in practice we cannot all do just as we please; so we must set up another standard: anyone can do as he pleases so long as his acts do not hurt or offend anyone else. (See J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*, *passim*). Who is to decide what acts do not hurt or offend others? Since there are no absolute standards, let the question be decided by the whole community, or rather by a majority of the community, or in practice by any group which can control the votes and voices of the majority. The notion that each free man is striving to obey eternal law is no longer available, but at least the community can check incipient anarchy by means of positive coercive laws, by public education aimed at indoctrinating the population, by popular pressures exerted against non-conformity, by the weight of the "media of mass-communication" and by a hundred other techniques of genteel or brutal tyranny. Thus we renounce the belief in an overriding moral law and religious faith as the condition of freedom, only to substitute for that objective system, the relativistic laws imposed by a majority or by a combination of minorities or by an oligarchy which manages to manipulate the majority or minorities. The exchange is not an overwhelmingly obvious improvement.

Fortunately, the drift of events in Christian countries has not been cruelly logical. Part of the fundamental assumption of Christianity has remained to act as an effective check upon the tendencies of secular liberalism, and many who have adopted uncritically the terminology and definitions of a secular era do not in fact act in accordance with them. In Britain and America, the average man does not assume that goodness is a mere convention dictated by the positive laws or customs of the people, nor does he believe that a majority of the people, however overwhelm-

ing, can make evil good. All the same, popular assumptions as to the *meaning* of freedom, even in those countries in which the elements of true freedom exist, are essentially false and have little connection in men's minds with the Christian definition. Pelagius has overthrown St. Augustine, and the idea of secular anarchism replaced that of spiritual law and order. We may take note of the degree to which the failure of the Church has contributed to our moral disaster. The corruption of the Church, that is to say, its loss of the ability to perceive or to strive to implement the Christian message, has occasionally been great; and on such occasions it has not only lost moral prestige (which has been usurped by secular forces) but has fallen into schism and so encouraged within itself the anarchic idea of freedom. The writings of Montaigne, Machiavelli, Hobbes and the "enlightened" philosophers of the eighteenth century all took hold of thinking men at times when the Church was in phases of depression, and the Church, in spite of great efforts, has never recovered the ground then lost. Puritanism itself led to secularism in the long run, as Hooker foresaw and as Ralph Barton Perry argues complacently in his book *Puritanism and Democracy*. Similarly, during the modern era, the Church renounced in one way or another its leadership in social policy, social justice, education and charity; that sensitive reformers and agitators would work outside and even against the Church was inevitable. Moreover, and this is perhaps the greatest failure, the Church ceased to be the spearhead of intellectual progress, becoming instead a dead center of resistance to new thought and new investigation. In the middle ages, new ideas were incubated within the Church; in the modern world, the Church has often tried to addle fresh-laid eggs of thought.

We may appropriately conclude this effort to recover the Christian definition of freedom and to show its importance at the present juncture of history by dwelling for

a moment on the implication of the above criticisms of the Church's record in modern times. If the Christian concept of freedom is to take hold once more of men's minds, it must be made clear that this concept is the essence of freedom and not a sinister piece of "double-think" designed to conceal an essential tyranny. The foundation of Christian freedom is the assumption that God is the Ruler of the Universe, that he rules through just and perfect Laws, and that His relation to men follows from His love for them and His will to save them from the consequences of sin. From these premises it results that men's greatest aim must be to rise above sin, ignorance and death, an aim which they cannot achieve without God's help. In achieving this aim, they acquire freedom. Yet one of the greatest errors that Christians can commit is to assume that they have fully and finally achieved this aim, to assume that they "know all the answers" and are, so to speak, in possession of a direct telephone line with the Almighty. The consequence of such an illusion is either antinomianism or infallibility, both of which are signs of spiritual pride and both indications that freedom has turned into internal slavery and external tyranny. If Christians are true to their own principles they must insist that the Laws of God are capable of continuous responsible and expert investigation, and that such critical investigation will not and cannot undermine those Laws. To assume that moral laws and natural laws are absolute is not to assume that they are fully known. Even revealed divine law requires continuous, learned and humble re-examination. Christianity is not a closing of the roads of intellectual and moral discovery and improvement for individuals or societies.

He who begins by loving Christianity better than truth, will proceed by loving his own sect or church better than Christianity, and end in loving himself better than all.¹¹

This point is admirably expressed by the

Very Reverend W. R. Matthews in his contribution to a pamphlet issued by the British Group of the Liberal International:

I remember once as a shy young man joining in a discussion with G. K. Chesterton on toleration and venturing to suggest that men became tolerant only when they began to doubt whether there was such a thing as absolute truth. I was met by such a roar of indignation from the great man that I was silent for the rest of the evening. Subsequent reflection has convinced me that we were both right. What I ought to have said was that to be persuaded that one is in possession of the absolute truth is indeed difficult to reconcile with the belief in tolerance, but that to believe that there is absolute truth, though one does not know it, except in part, is the most favourable intellectual soil in which toleration can grow.¹²

The soundest defense of intellectual freedom is this: that truth exists and that it is therefore man's duty to seek it and verify it. This does not mean, as the false conception of liberty implies, that everyone has a "right" to think and believe as he pleases, or that anyone is entitled to teach any rubbish he feels like teaching to anyone sufficiently ignorant or unbalanced to listen. On the contrary, it calls for a tremendous sense of responsibility in every person, an anguished consciousness of the duty to try to be right, a recognition of the need to study and master one's own field of endeavor, and an acute conscientiousness in all one's speech and action. Given a sufficiently large proportion of conscientious persons in a society, whatever abuses of free enquiry and free speech may be committed by the less conscientious or the ignorant will be self-cancelling. For this reason, a society dominated by a responsible concept of freedom under moral law is able to grant great latitude of discussion and publication and behavior: it is thus enabled to perceive and correct grievances and injustices and

errors before they grow intolerable. In a society, however, where the more influential groups have ceased to understand the essential nature of freedom, free speculation and speech must inevitably be suppressed. For, if men assume that freedom means relativity, centrifugality, faction, and selfishness, they rapidly reach a point at which their cross-purposes become intolerable: then any tyrant or tyrannical system of ideas will be welcomed as a solution of their difficulties. If truth does not exist, it obviously does not matter which particular untruth (Leninism, Stalinism, the Myth of the Aryan Race, the Myth of Zionism or Hundred-Percent Americanism) is chosen for the purpose of restoring some sort of order out of chaos. Such is the final consequence of the false theory of liberty. The theme is effectively elaborated in Walter Lippmann's *Essays in the Public Philosophy*.

It appears, then, that the Christian definition of freedom, which requires as its absolute condition the realization that the truth shall make you free, and as a consequence the awareness on the part of the free man that he is bound to try to understand and obey a system of perfect moral law is in fact the philosophical foundation of what we call a free society. For a free society is a society composed of men who can be relied on and who can rely upon each other to act voluntarily without constant surveillance and coercion in accordance with moral laws and ideal purposes which they have accepted and understood. The necessary connection between religious belief and political freedom was noted as a scientifically observable fact by Alexis de Tocqueville over a hundred years ago.

When authority ceases to exist in religion as well as in politics, men soon become terrified of this unlimited independence. This perpetual agitation of all things disturbs and wearies them. Since everything in the world of thought is in flux, they desire at least to have everything in the world of matter firm

and stable, and since they cannot recover their ancient beliefs, they give themselves a master. For myself, I doubt if man can ever endure simultaneously complete religious independence and full political liberty; and I am driven to conclude that if man has no faith he must be in servitude, and that if he is free, he must have religious belief.¹³

A man does not have to be a professing Christian in order to appreciate the relation between the belief in an obligatory moral order and the possibility of freedom. Plato and Cicero assuredly conceived of freedom in terms very similar to the Christian, and an agnostic mathematician might well come to the conclusion that since the Universe was controlled by rational laws human existence by analogy should be similarly ordered in accordance with certain absolutes. The Christian, however, while accepting the alliance and confirmation of philosophy and science, is

strengthened and inspired by the knowledge that he is bound to freedom by the will of God working through his own personal will; he knows, too, that his own freedom and that of his society will depend on the degree to which he and his fellow-citizens are given grace to obey God's will. He will thus come to perceive that the clear enunciation and the constant practice of Christian freedom and the rejection of the heresy of anarchic freedom, are most necessary Christian duties in this age of crisis and cruelty and advancing slavery. He will call to mind Saint Peter's warning against false prophets of liberty: "For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought in bondage." (II Pet. 2:18,19.)

is indeed spiritual religion." Comment on Aphorism 1.

¹Augustine, *City of God*, V, i.

²*Philosophy of the Good Life*, p. 240.

³*Op. cit.*, second edition, p. 309.

⁴Lionel Trilling, *The Middle of the Journey*, New York; Viking Press; 1947, pp. 299-300.

⁵Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, "Moral and Religious Aphorisms", No. XXV.

⁶*The Meaning of Freedom*, London, Pall Mall Features Ltd.; 1956, pp. 25-26.

⁷*De la démocratie en Amérique*, Paris 1868, tome III, part I, chapter V; present writer's translation.

¹*Reflections on the Revolution in France*, edited by F. G. Selby; London; Macmillan; 1930, p. 8.

²Coleridge, *Table Talk*, June 15, 1833.

³Bertrand Russell, *Roads to Freedom: Socialism, Anarchism and Syndicalism*, London; Allen and Unwin; 3rd edition, p. 121.

⁴*The Philosophy of the Good Life*, London; Everyman Library; Dent; 1935, p. 238.

⁵Quoted in Henry Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, London; World's Classics; Oxford University Press; 1954, p. 419.

⁶*Aids to Reflection*, "Aphorisms on that which

Up from Liberalism

RICHARD M. WEAVER

A vigorous writer and influential scholar from western North Carolina, Professor Weaver describes the origins of his conservative convictions. Other autobiographical essays by leading conservative thinkers will appear in subsequent issues of this review.

THERE IS A SAYING by William Butler Yeats that a man begins to understand the world by studying the cobwebs in his own corner. My experience has brought home to me the wisdom in this; and since the contemporary ideal seems to run the other way, confronting the youth first with the abstractions of universalism, collectivism, and internationalism, I propose to say something on behalf of the historic and the concrete as elements of an education.

The discovery did not come to me as a free gift, for practically every conviction I now hold I have had to win against the propositional sense and general impetus of most of my formal education. This was owing partly to special circumstances, but mainly, I now believe, to the fact that the United States tends to institutionalize the chaotic and superficial type of education and to impose it with an air of business efficiency. This is not to imply that I was wiser than my generation, for I was filled with the formless aspirations which make such an education look like a good

thing, and I fell into most of the pitfalls that were left open. But I hope that a retrospect of twenty-five years, involving much change of opinion, gives some right to pass judgment; and furthermore I wish, in this testament, to discuss education as one of the proven means of doing something about the condition of man.

I was born in the Southern section of the United States, and at the age of seventeen I entered the University of Kentucky. I have more than once recalled how well Charles Peguy's description of himself at the beginning of his career at the *Ecole Normale* fitted me at this time: "gloomy, ardent, stupid." The University of Kentucky was what would be called in Europe a "provincial university," but I have since come to believe that if it had been more provincial in the right way and less sedulously imitative of the dominant American model, it would have offered better fare. Like most of our state-supported universities during the period, it was growing in enrollment and physical plant and losing

in character; moreover, it was given to the "elective" system, whereby seventeen-year-old students, often of poor previous training and narrow background, tell the faculty (in effect) what they ought to be taught. After many wayward choices I managed to emerge, at the end of my undergraduate course, with a fair introduction to the history—but not the substance—of literature and philosophy.

The professors who staffed this institution were mostly earnest souls from the Middle Western universities, and many of them—especially those in economics, political science, and philosophy—were, with or without knowing it, social democrats. They read and circulated *The Nation*, the foremost liberal journal of the time; they made sporadic efforts toward organizing liberal or progressive clubs; and of course they reflected their position in their teaching very largely. I had no defenses whatever against their doctrine, and by the time I was in my third year I had been persuaded entirely that the future was with science, liberalism, and equalitarianism, and that all opposed to these trends were people of ignorance or malevolence.

That persuasion was not weakened, I must add, by the fact that my class graduated in May, 1932, at almost precisely the time that the Great Depression reached its lowest point on the economic charts. College graduates were taking any sort of job they could get, however menial or unrelated to their preparation, and many, of course, were not getting jobs at all. It seemed then that some sort of political reconstruction was inevitable, and in that year I joined the American Socialist Party. My disillusionment with the Left began with this first practical step.

The composition of our small unit of the Socialist Party was fairly typical, I have since learned, of socialist organizations throughout the world. There was on the one side a group of academic people—teachers and students—who were intellectually trained and fairly clear in their objectives, but politically inexperienced and

temperamentally not adapted to politics. On the other side was about an equal number of town people who cannot be described for the good reason that they were nondescripts. They were eccentrics, novelty-seekers, victims of restlessness; and most of them were hopelessly confused about the nature and purpose of socialism. I remember how shocked I was when a member of this group suggested that we provide at our public rallies one of the "hillbilly bands" which are often used to draw crowds and provide entertainment in Southern political campaigns. This seemed to me entirely out of tone with what we were trying to do. I have since had to realize that the member was far more astute practically than I; the hillbilly music would undoubtedly have fetched more auditors and made more votes than the austere exposition of the country's ills which I thought it the duty of a socialist to make. But I am sure that the net result would not have been socialism. The two groups did not understand one another, and it is a wonder to me that they worked together as long as they did.

In the course of a membership of about two years, during which I served as secretary of the "local", as it was called, I discovered that although the socialist program had a certain intellectual appeal for me, I could not like the members of the movement as *persons*. They seemed dry, insistent people, of shallow objectives; seeing them often and sharing a common endeavor, moreover, did nothing to remove the disliking. I am afraid that I performed my duties with decreasing enthusiasm, and at the end of the period I had intimations, which I did not then face, that this was not the kind of thing in which I could find permanent satisfaction.

Meanwhile another experience had occurred which was to turn my thoughts in the same direction. I had gone as a graduate student to Vanderbilt University to pursue an advanced degree in literature. Vanderbilt was another provincial university, but it had developed in the hands of men intelligent enough to see the possibili-

ties that exist in a reflective provincialism. It was at that time the chief seat of the Southern Agrarian school of philosophy and criticism. This was one of the most brilliant groups in the United States, but its members held a position antithetical in almost every point to socialism and other purely economic remedies. By some their program was regarded as mere antiquarianism; by others it was attacked as fascist, since it rejected science and rationalism as the supreme sanctions, accepted large parts of the regional tradition, and even found some justification for social classes. But here, to my great surprise and growing confusion, I found that although I disagreed with these men on matters of social and political doctrine, I liked them all as persons. They seemed to me more humane, more generous, and considerably less dogmatic than those with whom I had been associated under the opposing banner. It began to dawn upon me uneasily that perhaps the right way to judge a movement was by the persons who made it up rather than by its rationalistic perfection and by the promises it held out. Perhaps, after all, the proof of social schemes was meant to be *a posteriori* rather than *a priori*. It would be a poor trade to give up a non-rational world in which you liked everybody for a rational one in which you liked nobody. I did not then see it as quite so sharp an issue; but the intellectual maturity and personal charm of the Agrarians were very unsettling to my then-professed allegiance.

Moreover, during my residence at Vanderbilt University I had the great good fortune to study under John Crowe Ransom, a rare teacher of literature and, apart from this and in his own right, a profound psychologist. Of the large number of students who have felt his influence, I doubt whether any could tell how he worked his effects. If one judged solely by outward motions and immediate results, he seemed neither to work very hard at teaching nor to achieve much success. But he had the gift of dropping living seeds into minds.

Long after the date of a lecture—a week, a month, a year—you would find some remark of his troubling you with its pregnancy, and you would set about your own reflections upon it, often wishing that you had the master at hand to give another piece of insight. The idea of Ransom's which chiefly took possession of me at this time was that of the "unorthodox defense of orthodoxy," which he had developed in his brilliant book *God without Thunder*. I began to perceive that many traditional positions in our world had suffered not so much because of inherent defect as because of the stupidity, ineptness, and intellectual sloth of those who for one reason or another were presumed to have their defense in charge.

This was a troubling perception, because the 1930's were a time when nearly all of the traditional American ideologies were in retreat, and I had never suspected that this retreat might be owing to a kind of default. If there was something to be said for them, if their eclipse was due to the failure of their proponents to speak a modern idiom or even to acquire essential knowledge, this constituted at least a challenge to intellectual curiosity. I had tried some of the Leftist solution and had found it not to my taste; it was possible that I had been turned away from the older, more traditional solutions because they wore an antiquarian aspect and insisted upon positions which seemed irrelevancies in the modern context. Actually the passage was not an easy one for me, and I left Vanderbilt University poised between the two alternatives. I had seen virtually nothing of socialism and centralism in practice, and the mass man I had never met; there was also reluctance over giving up a position once publicly espoused, made somewhat greater by a young man's vanity. Nevertheless, I had felt a powerful pull in the direction of the Agrarian ideal of the individual in contact with the rhythms of nature, of the small-property holding, and of the society of pluralistic organization.

I had left the University to take a teaching post in a large technical college in Texas. It has been remarked that in the United States California is the embodiment of materialism and Texas of naturalism. I found the observation true with regard to my part of Texas, where I encountered a rampant philistinism, abetted by technology, large-scale organization, and a complacent acceptance of success as the goal of life. Moreover, I was here forced to see that the lion of applied science and the lamb of the humanities were not going to lie down together in peace, but that the lion was going to devour the lamb unless there was a very stern keeper of order. I feel that my conversion to the poetic and ethical vision of life dates from this contact with its sterile opposite.

I recall very sharply how, in the Autumn of 1939, as I was driving one afternoon across the monotonous prairies of Texas to begin my third year in this post, it came to me like a revelation that I did not *have* to go back to this job, which had become distasteful, and that I did not *have* to go on professing the clichés of liberalism, which were becoming meaningless to me. I saw that my opinions had been formed out of a timorous regard for what was supposed to be intellectually respectable, and that I had always been looking over my shoulder to find out what certain others, whose concern with truth I was beginning to believe to be not very intense, were doing or thinking. It is a great experience to wake up at a critical juncture to the fact that one does have a free will, and that giving up the worship of false idols is a quite practicable proceeding.

Anyhow, at the end of that year I chucked the uncongenial job and went off to start my education over, being now arrived at the age of thirty.

In the meantime I had started to study the cobwebs in my own corner, and I began to realize that the type of education which enables one to see into the life of things had been almost entirely omitted from my program. More specifically, I

had been reading extensively in the history of the American Civil War, preferring first-hand accounts by those who had actually borne the brunt of it as soldiers and civilians; and I had become especially interested in those who had reached some level of reflectiveness and had tried to offer explanations of what they did or the manner in which they did it. Allen Tate has in one of his poems the line "There is more in killing than commentary." The wisdom of this will be seen also by those who study the killings in which whole nations are the killers and the killed, namely, wars. To put this in a prose statement: the mere commentary of an historian will never get you inside the feeling of a war or any great revolutionary process. For that, one has to read the testimonials of those who participated in it on both sides and in all connections; and often the best insight will appear in the casual remark of an obscure warrior or field nurse or in the effort of some ill-educated person to articulate a feeling.

I once heard of a man who made it a lifetime hobby to study the reasons that people in various circumstances gave as to why they felt it necessary to tell a lie. I believe that it is equally worthwhile and perhaps more interesting to study the reasons that people have given for passing from the use of reason to the use of force. At what point does reason tell us that reason is of no more avail? The American Civil War, because it was a civil struggle, with an elaborate ideology on both sides, left a rich store of material on this subject.

From the viewpoint of my general purpose, I had come to believe that one way to achieve the education which leads to understanding and compassion is to take some period of the past and to immerse oneself in it so thoroughly that one could think its thoughts and speak its language. The object would be to take this chapter of vanished experience and learn to know it in three if not four dimensions. That would mean coming to understand why certain actions which in the light of retro-

spect appear madly irrational appeared at that time the indisputable mandate of reason; why things which had been created with pain and care were cast quickly on the gaming table of war; why men who had sat in the senate chamber and debated with syllogism and enthymeme stepped out of it to buckle on the sword against one another. Almost any book of history will give you the form of such a time, but what will give you the *pressure* of it? That is what I particularly wished to discover.

I am now further convinced that there is something to be said in general for studying the history of a lost cause. Perhaps our education would be more humane in result if everyone were required to gain an intimate acquaintance with some coherent ideal that failed in the effort to maintain itself. It need not be a cause which was settled by war; there are causes in the social, political, and ecclesiastical worlds which would serve very well. But it is good for everyone to ally himself at one time with the defeated and to look at the "progress" of history through the eyes of those who were left behind. I cannot think of a better way to counteract the stultifying "Whig" theory of history, with its bland assumption that every cause which has won has deserved to win, a kind of pragmatic debasement of the older providential theory. The study and appreciation of a lost cause have some effect of turning history into philosophy. In sufficient number of cases to make us humble, we discover good points in the cause which time has erased, just as one often learns more from the slain hero of a tragedy than from some brassy Fortinbras who comes in at the end to announce the victory and proclaim the future disposition of affairs. It would be perverse to say that this is so of every historical defeat, but there is enough analogy to make it a sober consideration. Not only Oxford, therefore, but every university ought to be to some extent "the home of lost causes and impossible loyalties." It ought to preserve the memory of these with a certain discriminat-

ing measure of honor, trying to keep alive what was good in them and opposing the pragmatic verdict of the world.

For my part, I spent three years reading the history and literature of the Civil War, with special attention to that of the losing side. The people who emerged were human, all-too-human, but there was still the mystery of the encompassing passion which held them together, and this I have not yet penetrated. But in a dozen various ways I came to recognize myself in the past, which is at least an important piece of self-knowledge.

Toward the end of this inquiry, I published my first article, "The Older Religiousness in the South." It was an attempt to explain why the South, although it was engaged in defending institutions which much of the world was condemning on moral grounds, seemed to exhibit a more intense religiosity than its opponents. It was a first effort toward an unorthodox explanation of an orthodoxy, and it showed me how much more was to be done in historical revision of the kind before the shallow liberal interpretation could be exposed in its inadequacy.

Looking back over this discipline, I feel confident enough of its principle. The aim is to strip aside the clichés of generalization, the slogans which are preserved only because they render service to contemporary institutions, and of course to avoid the drug of economic interpretation. Henry Adams felt an impulse to do something like this amid the hullabaloo of his America, and his inquiry led him—this bloodless, self-questioning descendant of New England Puritans—to ponder the mystery of the Virgin. It seems to me that in some corresponding way the process will compel any honest seeker to see that the lines of social and political force are far more secret than the modern world has any mind to recognize, and that if it does not lead him to some kind of faith, it will lead him safely away from the easy constructions of those who do not wish to understand, beyond grasping what can be turned to serve

a practical purpose. Whereas conventional schoolbook history leaves men cocksure and ignorant, this multidimensional kind ought to leave them filled with wonder. Long before, I had been impressed by Schopenhauer's statement that no one can be a philosopher who is not capable at times of looking upon the world as if it were a pageant. This kind of detachment, produced by a suppression of the instinct to be arbitrary, seems to me a requirement for understanding the human condition.

The attempt to contemplate history in all its dimensions and in the fullness of its detail led directly to the conviction that this world of substantial things and substantial events is the very world which the Leftist of our time wishes to see abolished; and such policy now began to appear egotistical and presumptuous. I am disinclined to the view that whatever exists necessarily has a commission to go on existing. On the contrary, I have a strong tendency to side with the bottom dog, or to champion the potential against the actual if the former seems to have some reason behind it; and I am mindful of the saying that God takes delight in bringing great things out of small ones. To this extent I am a reformer or even a subverter. But I feel that situations almost never present themselves in terms so simple. They usually appear in terms like these: we have before us a tremendous creation which is largely inscrutable. Some of the intermediate relationships of cause and effect we can grasp and manipulate, though with these our audacity often outruns good sense and we discover that in trying to achieve one balance we have upset two others. There are, accordingly, two propositions which are hard to deny: we live in a universe which was given to us, in the sense that we did not create it; and, we don't understand very much of it. In the figure once used by a philosopher, we are inhabitants of a fruitful and well-ordered island surrounded by an ocean of ontological mystery. It does not behoove us to presume very far in this situation. It is not a mat-

ter of affirming that whatever is, is right; it is a recognition that whatever is there is there with considerable force (inertia even being a respectable form of force) and in a network of relationships which we have only partly deciphered. Therefore, make haste slowly. It is very easy to rush into conceit in thinking about man's relationship to the created universe. Science paved the way for presumption, whether wittingly or not; and those political movements which appeal to science to vindicate their break with the past have often made the presumptuous attitude one of their tenets. I found myself in decreasing sympathy with those social and political doctrines erected upon the concept of a man-dominated universe and more and more inclined to believe with Walt Whitman that "a mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels."

As a further consequence of reflecting upon this problem, I began to see it in theological terms. As I have suggested, "the authority of fact" is a phrase that I am a little uncomfortable with, because it is readily turned, unless one is vigilant, into an idolatry of circumstance, and this is the most unspiritual of all conditions. Nevertheless, there is a way in which "the authority of fact" carries a meaning that we can accept. It merely requires that we see "fact" as signifying what the theological philosophers mean by the word "substance." Now the denial of substance is one of the greatest heresies, and this is where much contemporary radicalism appears in an essentially sinful aspect. The constant warfare which it wages against anything that has *status* in the world, or against all the individual, particular, unique existences of the world which do not fit into a rationalistic pattern, is but a mask for the denial of substance. If one benighted class of men begins by assuming that whatever is, is right, they begin by assuming that whatever is, is wrong. Had we to decide between these two—and I hope to make it clear that I do not think we have to decide thus—the latter would

appear more blasphemous than the former because it makes a wholesale condemnation of a creation which is not ours and which exhibits the marks of a creative power that we do not begin to possess. The intent of the radical to defy all substance, or to press it into forms conceived in his mind alone, is thus theologically wrong; it is an aggression by the self which outrages a deep-laid order of things. And it has seeped into every department of our life. In the reports of the successful ascent of Mt. Everest, the British members of the expedition talked of "conquering" the mountain, but the Nepalese guide who was one of the two to reach the summit spoke of a desire to visit the Buddha who lives at the top. The difference between these attitudes is a terrible example of the modern western mentality, with its metaphysic of progress through aggression.

Here again was an invitation to ponder one of the oldest and deepest of human attitudes, which is generally expressed by the word "piety". The war of the radicals against substance is a direct repudiation of this quality. It is true that a great many instances of sham, in both word and deed, have been associated with this term, so that one runs a danger by bringing it into

any modern discussion of ethics and religion. Nevertheless, it seems to me that it signifies an attitude toward things which are immeasurably larger and greater than oneself without which man is an insufferably brash, conceited, and frivolous animal. I do not in truth see how societies are able to hold together without some measure of this ancient but now derided feeling. The high seriousness of this life expresses itself as a kind of *pietas*, or a respect for the tragedy of existence, if nothing else. Piety is another one of those orthodoxies which have broken down because the defenders have not been able to show what is necessary in them. They have erected their defenses on positions quite easily overrun, and the places they could easily have defended they have left unmanned. As long as the term is associated exclusively with the avoidance of foibles and minor vices, there seems no hope of restoring the vital idea for which it stands. But when one shows that the habit of veneration supplies the whole force of social and political cohesion, one hits at its enemies where the blow cannot be ignored.

The realization that piety is a proper and constructive attitude toward certain things helped me to develop what Russell

Singing

All merges: the song of students to the beat of drums; the thought of how, like soldiers with young hearts, they walked into the evening, not turning to turn back.

Waves will recede to ocean; leaves fall in their track.

All merges: last night I heard
 Respighi's Old Italian Airs and Dances.
 It follows, I must hear the singing still.
 And do, and will: something of the sense
 of the Holy
 that rises, and unto itself, beyond time,
 advances.

All merges: yes, all is merged within.
 At noon, I walked in the rain, the strains
 always with me; around me, nothing was
 still.

I think of it now, more than thinking,
 I reflect on the essence that is with me now
 and was equally then, behind each scene.

And it assures me; how it assures me:
 even all that the sense of the Holy evokes,
 like absolute peace in a dream, merges.
Each flock returneth to its origin.

ARTHUR GREGOR

Kirk calls "affection for the proliferating variety and mystery of traditional life". I feel now, in looking over the course of things, that such an attitude has always been in my nature, but that it had been repressed by dogmatic, utilitarian, essentially contumacious doctrines of liberalism and scientism, so that it was for me a kind of recovery of lost power or lost capacity for wonder and enchantment. The recovery has brought a satisfaction which cannot be matched, as far as my experience goes, by anything that liberalism and scientism have to offer.

It is what I feel when I return to the South, as I do each summer. There are numberless ways in which the South disappoints me; but there is something in its sultry languor and in the stubborn humanism of its people, now battling against the encroachments of industrialism—and with so little knowledge of how to battle—which tells me that for better or worse this is my native land. It is often said today that the hope of the world lies in internationalism. That may be true, but it is also true, and true with a prior truth, that there can be no internationalism without a solid, intelligent provincialism. That is so because there is nothing else for internationalism to rest on. And if philosophical sanction for this is wanted, there is the wise and beautiful saying of Thoreau: "I think nothing is to be hoped for from you, if this bit of mould under your feet is not sweeter to you to eat than any other in the world, or in any world."

Nevertheless, it is most important, as I have tried to suggest earlier, to draw a line between respect for tradition because it is tradition and respect for it because it expresses a spreading mystery too great for our knowledge to compass. The first is merely an idolatry, or a tribute to circumstance, which has engendered some of the most primitive, narrow, and harmful attitudes which the human race has shown. There is a worship of tradition and circumstance which is all fear, distrust, and feebleness of imagination, and to this the

name "reaction" is rightly applied. There can be no hope for good things from an attitude as negative as this. But the other attitude is reverential and creative at the same time; it worships the spirit rather than the graven image; and it allows man to contribute his mite toward helping Providence. Obviously free will would be meaningless if the world were to be left entirely untouched by us. Some things we have to change, but we must avoid changing out of *hubris* and senseless presumption. And always we have to keep in mind what man is supposed to be.

At the same time that the radical is engaged in denying the substance, he is engaged in denying the existence of evil, which is another great heresy. This takes the form today, as we all recognize, of assuming the perfectibility of man, the adequacy of social and political measures for the salvation of the individual person, and all the means of state engineering which are supposed to take the place of the old idea of redemption. Apart from the dilemma that the denial of evil involves us in, it brings into our moral, intellectual, and cultural life a number of destructive fallacies. It brings in, for example, the flat-tery of the popular will, the idealization of the mediocre, and along with these a spirit of rebelliousness toward anything that involves self discipline, sustained effort, and service to autonomous ideals. There is abroad in democracies today an idea that to criticize anybody for anything is treasonable, that the weak, the self-indulgent, and the vicious have the same claims toward respect and reward as anybody else, and that if a man chooses to be a beast, he has a sort of natural, inviolable right to be one. As far as I can see, there is no possible way of opposing this idea until we admit the existence of evil and the duty of combatting it. Here modern radicalism has failed again to interpret the issue.

It has been said that a disillusionment with human nature most often turns the mind toward Christianity. I know that in

my period of jejune optimism the concept of original sin seemed something archaically funny. Now, twenty years later, and after the experience of a world war, there is no concept that I regard as expressing a deeper insight into the enigma that is man. Original sin is a parabolical expression of the immemorial tendency of man to do the wrong thing when he knows the right thing. The fact of this tendency everyone should be able to testify to, not only from his observation but also from his personal history. And it is the rock upon which nine tenths of the socialist formula for universal happiness splits. The socialists propose to offer man peace and plenty; and they seem not to realize that he may reject both for crime and aggrandizement. He has done so before in both the individual and the national units. It would be more realistic for the reformers to start with the old assumption that the heart of man is desperately wicked and that he needs external help in the form of grace. At least, we cannot build on the quicksand that he is by nature good, for he is not. Whether he has inherited his sin from Adam is perhaps a question for another level of discussion; the plain situation is that he has inherited it, and that it will sink any scheme which is founded on a complacent faith in man's desire always to do the good thing. Nothing can be done if the will is wrong, and the correction of the will is precisely the task which modern radicalism fails to recognize.

It is only realistic to point out that the concept of original sin, if not anti-democratic, is at least a severe restraint upon democracy. Democracy finds it difficult ever to say that man is wrong if he does things in large majorities. Yet even politically this notion has to be rejected; and that is why constitutions and organic laws are created in nearly all representative governments, and are indeed regarded as the prime unifiers of such governments. A constitution is a government's better self, able to rebuke and restrain the baser self

when it starts off on a vagary. If the mass of every electorate were wholly right at every period, constitutions would be only curious encumbrances. This means of distinguishing what is right deeply and naturally from what is wrong needs to be carried over also into our individual lives, where it sets a limit on indulgences of the self.

For all these reasons, those who say that evil is but a bad dream or an accident of history or the creation of a few antisocial men are only preparing us for worse disillusionments and disasters. It is necessary to recognize evil as a subtle, pervasive, protean force, capable of undoing plans that promise the fairest success, but also capable of being checked by proper spiritual insight and energy. This makes the problem of improving the individual and society continuous with known human history and not different according to different phases of economic and technological development.

The persistence of the fact of evil was then being underlined for me by the dreadful events of the Second World War. A question was posed in sharp form when the claims of modern and "advanced" civilization were being refuted by the presence of this greatest creator of misery. Wars not only were becoming more frequent, they were also becoming more absolute or more indiscriminating in their ends and means.

The prosecution of the war by the Western allies was to me a progressive disillusionment. My study of the American Civil War had made me acquainted with the principle that as a war continues, the basis of the war changes, but I had not been prepared to see the extent to which the moral aim may deteriorate. My faith in the honesty of our case was shaken by an incident that occurred about the middle of the conflict. The incident is not very well remembered because it concerned chiefly a small country, and what does a small country count for in a world where everything is decided by a Big Four or

a Big Three or a Big Something? This was the abandonment of Finland by Britain and the United States, who had previously bucked up her morale and to some extent her strength against the Russian foe. I felt that if Finland could be cheerfully thrown to the wolves in the haste for victory and vengeance, much worse things must be anticipated, and so it has proved. And the Yalta Conference seemed to me at the very time when the newspapers were crowded with the most fantastic tributes and eulogies a piece of political insanity.

In sum, I felt that, thanks to our wonderful press and our Office of War Information and our political leaders, almost nobody in the United States knew what the war was really about. I recall sitting in my office in Ingleside Hall at the University of Chicago one Fall morning in 1945 and wondering whether it would not be possible to deduce, from fundamental causes, the fallacies of modern life and thinking that had produced this holocaust and would insure others. In about twenty minutes I jotted down a series of chapter headings, and this was the inception of a book entitled *Ideas Have Consequences*. At first it seemed destined to have only a *succès de scandale*, since it was so out of line with most current thinking on the subject. But many letters I later received from readers convinced me that other minds were tormented by the same questions, and that I had only gone to the point of saying what numerous people were thinking. The kind of opposition it aroused too seemed a confirmation.

It may sound odd, but it is true that the thesis of this book was first suggested by the bygone ideal of chivalry. My reading of history had encouraged the belief that at one time this had been an ideal of considerable restraining power, and that it contained one conception that seems to be absent from all the contemporary remedies for curing war—the conception of something spiritual which stood above war itself and included the two sides in any conflict. I have never had any faith in the

notion of ending wars by fighting one war to a victorious and sweeping conclusion. The idea of a “war to end all wars” is worthy only of a mountebank. What such an attempt does in actuality is to scatter the seeds of war more widely, and possibly plant them more deeply. It does not take into account the intransigency of human nature.

The profoundly interesting feature of chivalry was that it offered a plan whereby civilization might contain a war and go on existing as civilization. It did not premise itself upon simplifications which are soon rejected, such as the proposition that “all war is murder.” On the contrary, it tried to treat war or human combat as one of the activities of civilization, a dangerous one, to be sure, but one that could be kept under control. War under the code of chivalry might be likened to what the insurance companies call “a friendly fire.” It is a useful thing to man as long as it is kept in a furnace or whatever place is intended for it. But a fire which gets out of the place created for it ceases to be friendly; it is a foe and can spread quick and terrible devastation. Thus the warfare controlled, or the war of limited objectives, is the friendly fire; but a war which has unlimited objectives has broken out of control and may, with the weapons now available, be capable of consuming civilization in a holocaust. Hence the problem is: what kind of thing is capable of controlling war, or of keeping it *within* civilization? It would be absurd to claim that chivalry accomplished all that the ideal pointed toward; there were episodes in the age of chivalry which make unpleasant reading. Nevertheless, it was a moderating influence; and it did one thing which makes it appear realistic in comparison with the solutions which are being proposed today. It insisted that even in war, when maximum strain is placed upon the passions, man may not become an absolute killer. In war there are some considerations which must not be crowded out by hatred and fear. This is true because even your

foe has some rights, and these rights you must respect although your present course has his destruction in view. This may seem to some too paradoxical, but let us consider it in terms of an analogy. Modern wars have tended increasingly to resemble lynching parties. A lynching party acts in the belief that the guilt of the victim is absolute and unqualified, and that the only thing that matters is to put him to death immediately. Any means will do: beating, pistol fire, a tree and a rope. Of course this idea is contrary to that of juridical procedure. The law never takes the view that a man's guilt is so absolute and so completely known that he is not allowed to say a word in his defense. On the contrary, the most atrocious murderer is given police protection and a trial according to forms of law, with a chance to state his side of the affair.

The law is in such instances upholding an idea similar to that of chivalry, inasmuch as it takes the position that no one — not even an "enemy of society" — can be denied rights entirely. In modern international warfare, however, the idea of a binding agreement such as this is being abandoned rapidly. The object now is to pulverize the enemy completely, men, women, and children being lumped into one common target; it is to reduce a country to "atomic ashes", to recall a frightful phrase which I saw recently in a newspaper. And then, if anything remains, the next step is the unethical one of demanding unconditional surrender. No further analysis should be needed to show that this moves in a direction opposite to that of the chivalric ideal, in that it pulls everything into the madness and destruction of war and leaves nothing, as far as I can see, to help pull even the victor out again.

There are those who maintain that modern technology, when applied to war, makes all such concepts as the one upheld by chivalry simply fantastic. There is no way of restraining a technology, they say, which is so developed that it cannot produce anything short of annihilation once

it is turned to destructive ends. Perhaps this cannot be disputed as a fact. Yet if it is a fact, it seems one more proof that we have allowed science to reach a point at which it no longer allows us to be human beings. If we have got ourselves into a position where our only choice is to blow up or be blown up, this circumstance refutes the idea that we have increased the mastery of our lives.

There cannot be any improvement in the world's condition until the human spirit has counterbalanced and more than counterbalanced the hectic brilliance of technological invention. The deadly trap into which the pride of the modern world in technology and invention has led us is not often described in its real nature. It has produced a world condition of unheard-of instability. The only way in which this instability can be overcome even temporarily is through rigid, centralized control of the national life. And the only way that a rigid, centralized control can be maintained is to keep the people living in a mentality of war. One can do this by filling them with desire of conquest, or one can do it by keeping them fearful of a real or imaginary enemy. Then one has a trump card to play on every occasion. If there is any relaxing or any resentment of controls, one has only to invoke "the national security" to silence opposition and even render it disreputable. We in the United States are living under the second of these policies now. The choice appears to lie between chaos and perpetual preparation for war, and the trouble with preparation for war is that it always issues in war. Here again technology steps in to make the dilemma more cruel, since it causes warfare to be increasingly total and nihilistic, and increasingly beyond the power of civilizing influences to absorb. From now on, as Maurice Samuel has pointed out, humanity will be living in the shadow of its own demonic omnipotence, and this is a calamity so great that almost nobody is able to face it. The chance that the world will not use atomic bombs if

it goes on making them is infinitesimal.

How this tide is flowing even into the small interstices of our lives may be shown by a small incident. A few years ago there stood on the edge of the campus of the University of Chicago a small café. It was a poor affair, without style or pretensions; but here in the afternoons members of the liberal-arts faculties were wont to go for a cup of coffee, to get out of their professional grooves for an hour, to broach ideas and opinions, to be practicing humanists, you might say. Today a monstrous gray structure given to atomic research covers the site; the little café is no more; and the amiable *Kaffeeklatsche* no longer take place.

The chief result of what I now think of as my re-education has been a complete disenchantment with the liberalism that was the first stage of my reflective life. Liberalism is the refuge favored by intellectual cowardice, because the essence of the liberal's position is that he has no position. It may be true, with due qualifications, that in certain transitional phases, where the outline of issues is none too clear, the liberal or uncommitted attitude has its expediency. But as something to construct with, never! It is that state of mind before we have made up our mind. The explanation of why liberalism has been erected into a kind of philosophy in our time is perhaps to be sought in the fact that our world is disintegrating rapidly. It is thereby creating the impression that nothing is permanent but change, and that the very concept of truth is a stumbling block to adaptation as the disintegration goes on.

But even after this concession to the state of affairs, it is easy to see how the liberal's lack of position involves him in contradictions that destroy confidence. He is a defender of individualism and local rights, but let some strong man appear, who promises salvation through "leadership," and the liberal becomes indistinguishable from the totalitarian. Hence the totalitarian liberal of our times, a con-

tradiction in terms, but an embodiment in the flesh, and a dire menace to government based upon rights. In times of peace, the liberal is often a shouter for pacificism, but let something he dislikes appear upon the horizon and he is the first to invoke the use of armed force. In education, he believes in the natural goodness of the child and abhors the idea of corporal discipline, but he believes in spanking nations with atomic bombs until their will is broken.

It is frequently said that while our knowledge of the natural world is increasing rapidly, our knowledge of the nature and spirit of man shows no gain, and that most of our troubles arise out of this disproportion. I think that our situation is considerably worse than this figure represents it, for I am of the opinion that our knowledge of the nature and spirit of man is decreasing, and this not relatively but absolutely. No one can study Greek philosophy or mediaeval Christianity or the other great religions of the world without realizing that these saw man as a creature fearfully and wonderfully made, and that each tried to lead him with appropriate imagination and subtlety. Today, living under the shadow of this demonic technological omnipotence, we are trying to get along by supposing such crudities as economic man, "naturally good" man, and so on. Of course they do not work, and the more they are tried in our context, the nearer we are to catastrophe.

Somehow our education will have to recover the lost vision of the person as a creature of both intellect and will. It will have to bring together into one through its training the thinker and the doer, the dialectician and the rhetorician. Cognition, including the scientific, alone is powerless, and will without cognition is blind and destructive. The work of the future, then, is to overcome the shallow rationalisms and scientificisms of the past two centuries and to work toward the reunion of man into a being who will both know and desire what he knows.

The problems of the British royal house.

Bagehot and the Monarchy

DEREK STANFORD

I

TODAY THE MONARCHY in Britain is under fire. Yet never since Victoria's years has it been so 'popular.' If this seems a paradox, it is one which explanation readily makes plain. Those who criticize the Queen in the performance of her office are a literate fraction, a noisy few — opinionated people with minority opinions. Those, on the other hand, who look towards her warmly are the largely silent many, whose instinctive loyalty finds little expression beyond a burst of cheers on state occasions. Of the first, we can say that they have a wrong notion of what monarchy is and entails; of the second, that they have no idea of it at all, or — at best — a vague unformulated one.

Nothing is so little understood to-day as the idea of the individual as a symbol; and since it is upon some such apprehension that the working nature of monarchy depends, misunderstanding inevitably results. What, then, is meant by the symbolical individual?

Anthropologists are agreed that the primitive psyche was powerfully collective; that it was, in fact, pre-individual. Primitive man had a limited and painful sense of self-identity. He found it difficult, and rather fearful, to conceive of himself in spatial isolation, as a separate being distinct from the environing communal body. When once an awareness of the self had become, for man, a psychological reality, primitive thinking was at an end: a new phase of history had begun. But this new way of thinking and feeling, which commenced to weaken at the Renaissance, was still far from individualistic in the segregated manner of to-day. Medieval society, with its feudal pyramid, produced an organic mode of thinking, of conceiving oneself in relation to the State. When the medieval man recognized the King as head of the commonweal, his thought enriched the metaphor with physiological implications. He envisaged himself as part of the body which the King's own person crowned. And as the head is part of the body, so the King and he were united, were of one social and spiritual flesh. The theory of loyalty stemming from this, and the horror of internecine conflict, are socially organic notions. 'Whatever happens to the King,' argued medieval man, 'happens to me.' His own health rested therefore on harmony between the monarch and his people.

Today, the tail-end of this mode of thought is retained in the image of the King as figure-head. The second word in this epithet preserves the organic medieval notion; but the first, with its reference to the carved bust on a ship's prow, suggests the more abstract function now accorded to this office. A ship's figure-head is inanimate. In Britain, at the present, we may imagine the Ship of State in the following fashion: at the helm of the vessel stands the Prime Minister, while over the cut-water leans the Queen. According to this metaphor, one office is real while one is nominal; one calls for personal activity, the other, for largely individual inaction. But, apparently, so misunderstood, these days, is the role of the symbolical individual that even this simple ceremonial image — a figure of speech acknowledged by millions — gives no indication of what we should expect from the Queen with reference to our way of living.

The two commonest misconceptions of her office may be styled 'the abstract' and 'the popular.' The first, which is almost exclusively evinced by Rationalists and Left-Wing Progressives, regards the monarchy as an empty pretension, an out-dated office without purpose or meaning. The fallacies of this attitude are many, but perhaps the chief of them is the belief that government is solely an administrative matter — a productive, work-performing affair. The 'teaching' aspect of government — its business of creating public ideals, public standards of conduct and behavior, especially in domestic and neighborly living — is something this attitude overlooks. By focussing upon the 'real work' of government — its legislation and policy-making — the 'abstract' critics of monarchy discover in the Throne a vain and idle status. But any government worth its salt must provide for the people some food of the ideal, some point of rest outside of laws and action, some source or spring of the national 'good life.' Different governments with different constitutions will attack this problem in differing ways. Some will

choose a President, some will resort to an Emperor by election, and some (like Britain) will seek to adapt hereditary kingship to this end. Certainly, the influence of the monarch as a model for private imitation, in the field of manners and morality, is an incalculable one. Even today, little girls in Britain are sometimes reclaimed from their tantrums by their mothers asking them if they thought their Queen would behave like that. In failing to see the function of the monarch as a reflecting reservoir of ideal behavior, the 'abstract' critics reveal their limitations. Their attitude reveals their 'impersonalist' conception of man as a social being. They imagine him as malleable to the word and working of law and logic, but do not view him as equally open to the plastic power of personal persuasion. To the quiet but telling rhetoric of good will and decorum, of modesty and simple moderation — which the monarch is expected to manifest in Britain — they turn a deaf utilitarian ear. Man, they would say, is better addressed by a Blue Book than a Blue Ribbon.

The 'abstract' party conceives of man as an adaptive animal even while it ignores his profoundly imitative powers. They conceive of the 'good society' as a structure rather like a mold, designed by *avant-garde* technocrats, sociologists, and statisticians. Into this legalistic construction of up-to-the-minute social engineers, they believe that man can be poured like a jelly, like a liquid substance which then proceeds to 'set.' Their error, here, consists in emphasizing the passive aspect of man's civic growth. They assume an absence of the will to resist, an absence of the will to develop, in terms of national personality, along an indigenously given line. This process of entelechy (which the 'abstract' critics neglect) is powerfully assisted by the existence of a social 'end-figure' — a symbolical individual, such as the monarch — upon whom the people may fix their eyes. Just as in the production of art, the creative process in the citizen is a largely

imitative matter. We grow by becoming what we approve, by approximating to our source of admiration. Few are stirred in such a fashion by the blue-prints of the social draftsman. And unless we are moved, we do not grow — which is what the 'abstract' planners fail to understand. Writing in 1867, Bagehot described the British Government as a "disguised republic." "Tell a cabman," he remarked, "to drive to Downing Street, [and] he most likely will never have heard of it, and will not in the least know where to take you." Yet every cabby knew Buckingham Palace. Men, we have said, demand to see the mover behind things, not the apparatus. In Britain, of course, the political movers are those who comprise the Cabinet. But these are changing impersonal figures. Their period of office, their life as statesmen (save in exceptional circumstances — Gladstone, Disraeli, Churchill, etc.) is too short for the popular imagination to crystallize richly about them. Longevity of status or function, as incarnate in the figure of the monarch, gives to the ordinary man a sense of contact with tradition. And without this sense of linkage with tradition, there is no sure growth — no extension to the future — only a marginal up-rooted aberration. Because of this, the social imagination in Britain fixes, then, on the figure of the Queen rather than on Mr. Macmillan. He, and his colleagues and opponents, come and go. The monarch alone has mortal permanence, a symbol of Aristotle's "Unmoved Mover."

Poets of an earlier day understood the essence of this with a conjunction of all their faculties: their will, their intelligence, and their imagination. The Court (or, rather more exactly, the Throne) was the natural center of thought when politics or social affairs were in question. But who ever heard of a school of poets growing up around the Cabinet? To-day, in Britain, this instinctive urge finds itself stultified by current culture. On the one hand, we have in Robert Graves, with his mytho-

poeic study of *The White Goddess*, a champion of the feminine-psyche image as the natural hub of poetic creation. On the other, in the fashionable exponents of Logical and Critical Positivism, a force making for disintegration in the symbolic workings of the mind. Without a certain assent to instinct, symbols cannot root or flower in the brain. When instincts are questioned and doubted and divided by a recurrent analytic process, the mind ceases to live by symbols, and attempts to direct itself by reason and 'hard facts.'

A paradox of this position is that we possess, in Robert Graves and his *White Goddess* myth, a theory of the mind's imaginative process with no public application of it. The rhetoric of civic occasion, in which this theory might find expression, is a lost art for most of our poets. With their minds pared and impoverished by the anti-synthetic currents of the day, the younger poets can crystallize their thoughts about no substantial loyalty or image which the whole nation shares with them. They are driven back to the smaller certainties (or hesitations), the verified hates or loves of private lives. Courtliness and compliment in address cannot reach out to seek the sovereign figure which should, at times, be their proper end or home. If, then, we still look to discover a traditional form of apostrophe, we must turn, not to the younger poets, but to an older practitioner of the craft. Thus, seventy-eight-year-old Herbert Palmer writes "At the Time of the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II" the following eloquent and liegeman-like lines:

You shoulder half the darkness of the
world
Though with a smile, and springtime
in your face;
So we have hope, for have you not unfurled
Our banner of Hope by your bestowing
grace?

But what is the 'reality' behind this graceful encomium? Certainly not one

which the Critical Positivist mind could admit as anything save a 'pseudo-statement.' In terms of the literal elaboration of policy, we know there is little the Queen can do, save through her Ministers. The answer is, that the monarch, and the "Hope" with which he or she inspires the people, is largely a mythopoeic reality — an impression produced in the imagination and not a managerial or administrative fact. This does not mean that it is not subject to verifiable proof in exceptional cases. The lack of "Hope" which certain bad monarchs, such as George IV, created in their people could have been a matter for public census if polls of opinion had then been established. The error, in short, of the 'abstract school' who criticize the monarchy in Britain to-day, is that it thinks in too crude and literal terms. Its notion of public function and office is dominated by Carlyle's doctrine of the supreme 'reality' of work. It does not recognize that public duty extends beyond the range of figures of production, that those who follow a path of public 'leisure' (or rather dedicate their leisure to the State), that those whose 'leisure' is mainly made up of humane, benevolent interest and inspection, are serving society every whit as much as the miner with his pick or the clerk with his pen. The 'truth' of the 'abstract critics' is partial. Like the "hard-fact fellows," whom Dickens exposed so brilliantly in his novel *Hard Times*, they divorce the facts of labor and production from their meaningful source — the full humane mind. They look to program-planning as a good in itself, without reference to the final satisfaction, the final human harmony which planning may effect. Their emblem is the ant (insect of labor) and not the butterfly (Greek symbol of the soul). It is not to be wondered at that, with these preconceptions, the subtle work of monarchy should be misconstrued by them.

But in Britain to-day the monarchy is as much embarrassed by its 'popular' adherents as by the censorious 'abstract'

school. As has been said, those who look to the Queen with warm, loyal, and simple feelings are largely of the unexpressive mass. The persons constituting this majority have seldom any individual view of her office. They cheer her, listen to her Christmas broadcast, and take a feeling interest in her family life. But, there, their understanding of her position ends. The Queen for them is a personality, but hardly a symbol of continuity. At first, this may seem a harmless attitude. The nineteenth-century critic Walter Bagehot has showed how 'stupidity' (more kindly described as the unanalytic mind) is a powerful national adhesive, a force binding society together by means of its broad, unprobing assent. But when this 'stupidity' finds itself provided with organs of expression, in the daily popular press, the nation becomes in danger of saturation and subjugation by it. One of the things we have to contend with in Britain, at the present moment, is an apotheosis of this 'stupidity,' a canonization of near-illiterate culture. This 'typist's' democracy is adept at presenting the Queen in terms of T.V. — or film-star-glamor; or, again, in exhibiting her as an almost suburban house-wife figure. In Britain, the Royalist generally has a streak of the egalitarian in him. He does not wish to see his sovereign presented as a Ruritanian *Roi-soleil*. He expects that the office of the Queen will be played down, but resents it being obscured or forgotten. In the 'printed democracy' of the popular daily press (and most Sunday newspapers heighten this impression) the personality-cult of the Queen detracts from true appreciation of the Throne. The Queen is loved and mobbed in print, but it is a love which depreciates her status in the imagination. The way in which news of the sovereign is presented puts her on a level with a famous tennis-player, a new pop-singer, or the latest radio-celebrity. But the Queen's status is mistakenly reckoned either in terms of a 'personality' or a glorified private individual. She represents the nation in terms of living as a Prime Minis-

ter only partly (because of his Party's affiliation) represents the country's political opinion. And this function of the monarchy the popular newspapers do not reflect.

Both the 'abstract' and the 'popular' schools ignore the Queen's role as a symbolical individual. The first, with its impersonal notion of the function of government, looks upon the Throne's symbolical role as an archaic figment devoid of content. The second, with its levelling theatrical bias, ignores it as an idea too hard to expound to the low-brow mind of newspaper readership. So it comes about that intelligent discussion of the monarchy in Britain is seldom to be heard.

II

The two chapters on "The Monarchy" in Walter Bagehot's classic *The English Constitution* offer a minimal defense of kingship. Because of this, their relevance to the present position is remarkably apt. The time for more assertive proclamations of faith in the sovereign power of the monarchy (such as Bolingbroke's *Patriot King*) is over and done with these two hundred years. Nor is an abstract historical work such as J. N. Figgis' *The Divine Right of Kings* likely to assist the confused public mind concerning itself with the question of the Crown. In order to preserve that show of compromise (a stabilizing factor in British history) the English mind has conditioned itself to a subtle avoidance of first principles in most great political and public issues. This has been called dishonesty, hypocrisy, and other bad names (according to the critic's standpoint). A kinder term for it, though, is pragmatism. This was a quality powerfully developed and deliberately cherished in Bagehot himself. His book on *The English Constitution* (first published in 1867) was no abstract treatise on the subject, no historical manual for the student. Instead, he wrote it for the intelligent man of business and affairs, suiting it, in brief, "to such a being as the Englishman in such a cen-

tury as the nineteenth." Such a being does not quite exist to-day, but because of the author's shrewd knowledge of human reaction, experience, and nature, there is much that we continue to find valid, as there is in the writings of his master Burke.

Bagehot saw the monarchy as possessing two capacities: "the dignified," and "the efficient." The first of these he reckoned the more important; its hold and influence on the minds of people being, as he said, "incalculable." Bagehot's defense of this "dignified" role is the more impressive because it springs, not from intellectual assent to kingship (as that exists in its pure idea), but from an approval of its actual working nature. "Most people," he writes — and he means the educated — "when they read that the Queen walked on the slopes at Windsor — that the Prince of Wales went to the Derby — have imagined that too much thought and prominence were given to little things. But they have been in error; and it is nice to trace how the actions of a retired widow and an unemployed youth become of such importance." "Retired widow" and "unemployed youth" — there is no Royalist unctious about these terms; but we should be wrong if we took them to imply a dismissal of royalty's magnetic power. "The best reason why Monarchy is a strong Government," continues Bagehot, on the heels of these remarks, "is that it is an intelligible government. The mass of mankind understand it, and they hardly anywhere in the world understand any other." This natural national focus which monarchy provides was something which Bagehot himself scorned the majority of people for requiring: "When you put before the mass of mankind the question, 'Will you be governed by a king, or will you be governed by a constitution?' the inquiry comes out thus — 'Will you be governed in a way you understand, or will you be governed in a way you do not understand?'" The implication here is that ignorance makes monarchy, for most men, the best kind of

government — the 'best' since the better cannot be apprehended.

Bagehot's importance as political theorist comes from his never minimizing the part which inertia, sluggishness of mind, and uninformed conservatism play in human nature. He knows (though he may regret the fact) that societies are not held together by abstract passion for logical perfection. He knows that political communities are not Utopias or Realms of Pure Idea; that the State is not like a syllogism. He is brusquely, healthily, non-Platonic. The majority of us, Bagehot points out, understand persons more readily than ideas. Government by kingship is more easily grasped than government by a Cabinet. "The acts of a single will, the fiat of a single mind" (which the mass of Bagehot's countrymen then read into kingship) can better be seized by the simple mind than "the nature of a constitution, the action of an assembly, the play of parties." Government by this nexus of factors is beyond the comprehension of the uninstructed. One of the values of the monarchy, as Bagehot saw it, was that it presented a focal-point for simple loyal attention, while the complex business of government took place beyond it as behind a screen. To pretend that the workings of the Cabinet are crystal-clear to every member of the British electorate would, of course, be erroneous; but, clearly, on this point, Bagehot's opinion stands in need of revision to-day. All now know that the Cabinet, and not the Queen, is the ruling body, though many still feel a firmer loyalty to the monarch than to the Party.

But, in one very real sense, Bagehot is right when he locates the power of the monarchy in its being individual. A person excites interest and attention, a person can be responded to with love. A Cabinet can hardly elicit such feelings; its collective nature de-personalizes it.

The personal aspect of monarchy is strengthened by its dynastic connections, for here the collective characteristic does

not produce an impersonal effect. As Bagehot remarks, "*the family on the throne is an interesting idea Women — one half of the human race — care fifty times more for a marriage than a ministry . . . [and] a princely marriage is the brilliant edition of a universal fact, and as such, it rivets mankind. . . . To state the matter shortly, Royalty is a Government in which the attention of the nation is concentrated on one person doing interesting actions.*"

Under the role of the monarch in her "dignified" capacity, Bagehot next considers other offices of the Queen — "historical, august, theatrical" — which are formal rather than personal in their nature. The Queen is the head of English society, and as such she is the apex of all Court functions and all national-level ceremonial occasions. Between good society as organized for the purpose of intercourse and conversation, and the staid hieratic society of the Court, Bagehot makes a careful distinction. The Court does not express an ideal of the best society, qualitatively considered. Instead, it represents top-society in terms of etiquette and precedence.

Bagehot compares the heavy vapid Court of Victoria's day with the glittering world of the Court of St. James under Charles II. In a very true social and cultural sense, this quizzical third Stuart was really the head of society: "Whitehall, in his time, was the center of the best talk, the best fashion, and the most curious love affairs of the age. [The King] did not contribute good morality to society, but he set an example of infinite agreeableness. He concentrated around him all the light parts of the high world of London, and London concentrated around it all the light part of the high world of England . . . Whitehall was an unequalled club, with female society of a very clever and sharp sort superadded." Bagehot's panegyric of this Congreve-like nucleus of brilliant individuals is of a purely aesthetic order. On the moral and the political side, he knew the dangers of a lively Court as affecting the monarch and the monarch's decisions. And

because of this, he exonerates the fusty and pompous Court of Victoria. A high-toned insipidness is the price the later nineteenth century paid in coming to regard "the Crown as head of our *morality*." When the ethical comes in, as Kierkegaard knew, the aesthetic and "interesting" may often go out.

Most of this still holds to-day; but the great decay of aristocracy—in power, social resources, and estates—has advanced the Queen to a fuller position in the public eye than Bagehot was able to envisage. Not only does the Queen take precedence, officially and formally, in setting the social tone, she also represents the aristocratic spirit and way of life before an audience of the whole nation. In this sense, she has to express the feudal and chivalric element in a peculiarly modern manner. As the Lords diminish, her own influence increases, making her, as it does so, a unique democratic paladin.

Concerning the other great office of the monarchy—its "efficient capacity," as he calls it—Bagehot is far more critical and cautious. He believes that "the post of sovereign over an intelligent and political people under a constitutional monarchy is the post which a wise man would choose above all others—where he would find the intellectual impulses best stimulated and the worst intellectual impulses best controlled." At the same time, he thinks that the likelihood of a "wise man" (in the sense of a sage) being born to the throne is somewhat remote. The education of a prince certainly makes more for honor, or courage, or social style than for wisdom or originality of mind. We should not expect Plato's philosopher-king.

Even so, the monarch can yet claim, in the light of his "efficient capacity," the three rights which Bagehot sets forth: "the right to be consulted, the right to encourage, the right to warn." Naturally, these may be more successfully supplied by an older rather than a younger sovereign. The monarch's office being permanent, while that of the Prime Minister is temporary,

the sovereign may call on a fund of experience not available to his Minister. A King who has sat some score years on the Throne will have seen Cabinets come and go, observing their respective successes and mistakes. The sum of this knowledge he can make over to his Prime Minister if he thinks fit to do so. But, again, this will depend on the kingly individual, his discernment and discretion, or lack of them.

The function, rights, and duties of the monarch are nowhere defined in tabular fashion. The office of the monarchy follows no written constitution in Britain. All goes by a subtle balance of precedence and initiative—a theme, so to speak, with individual variations. "There is," writes Bagehot, "no authentic explicit information as to what the Queen can do, any more than of what she does. . . . That secrecy is, however, essential to the utility of English royalty as it now is . . . royalty is to be revered, and if you begin to poke about you cannot reverence it. When there is a select committee on the Queen, the charm of royalty will be gone. Its mystery is its life. We must not let in daylight upon magic." Bagehot's words are still cogent to-day; and one wishes that this particular passage was framed on the walls of every British newspaper-office. Journalists rightly ask for color, but their brash and over-familiar touch rubs off the powder from many filmy wings. Must a popular press continually imply an offence to privacy?

Yet Bagehot, after his own lucid fashion, does explore this mystery for us. In the two brilliant chapters of *The English Constitution*, he penetrates the regal labyrinth, neither as worshipper nor iconoclast, but rather as a critical assessor. He balances the books of monarchy; and finds, at the end, a sum in credit. More might be said for the Crown at present than Bagehot said in Victoria's time. But what he wrote is a minimal defense—a statement of the case on its lowest assessment. Those who have not entertained his arguments, and countered them successfully, should be ruled out of court as critics of the Throne.

American and Continental Conservatism: Some Comparisons

*French and German conservative principles, and
their meaning for the growing American conserva-
tism.*

LUDWIG FREUND

IN DISCUSSIONS OF social theory, some people seek overly neat conceptual distinctions for which there is no foundation in social life. An article by Gordon K. Lewis in *The Western Political Quarterly*, several years ago (December, 1953), entitled "The Metaphysics of Conservatism"—for the most part, a critical analysis of Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind*—offers a clear sample of this fallacy.

If conservatism means both prudence and the defense of the established order, argues Lewis, then "the Fabian Socialist of 1889 and the New Deal reformer of 1933 are conservatives; the 'inevitability of gradualness' . . . was merely a Fabian rewording of the meaning of Macaulay's great speeches of 1831 on the issue of reform" (p. 730). If conservatism is no more than the pragmatic adjustment to a given order of society and a distrust of radical change, then even Lenin, according

to Mr. Lewis, can justly be termed a conservative. For, to continue Mr. Lewis' reasoning, once change has been effected the revolutionary's task consists in the defense of the "established order." To put it bluntly, Mr. Lewis' sophistic reasoning leads him to suspect that, since conservatism cannot be neatly and completely set apart from all other social-cultural trends, there is no rational, or any other, justification for it; and the "new conservatives" simply don't know what they are talking about. Anthony M. Ludovici, himself a rather extreme conservative, while arguing the case of conservative elements in communism in a fashion strikingly similar to that of the anti-conservative Lewis, reached the diametrically opposite conclusion that "there is no such phenomenon as permanent anti-conservatism" (*A Defence of Conservatism*, 1926, p. 7).

Mr. Lewis' position—if space would permit—could easily be shown to arise from a rationalistic bias which is one of the handicaps of the social science profession. In his eagerness to be logically coherent, he disregards those facts of life which do

not nicely and regularly conform to a strictly logical pattern. Like so many others, Lewis expects logically *clear cut* distinctions, where human situations with their frequently indefinable complexities do not offer such clear delineations. Since he cannot find them, the subject matter in question, to him, simply does not exist.

The point which Lewis does not grasp, but which Francis Wilson (*The Case for Conservatism*, 1951) succinctly explains, is that no social theory can properly disregard the phenomenon of dynamic and constant change in society. Hence, even conservatism "must be in part a theory of change. . . . Conservatism as a living political force has not believed that society can be made static by human political art or prudence" (p. 2). Conservatism is "a manner of judging life" in which certain values are defended, others resisted, as the case may be. What kind of values are defended, what others resisted, varies from one society to another, and also varies in degrees of intensity dependent upon both the circumstances and the temper of the times and a given society. Under no circumstances, however, is conservatism—as Anthony M. Ludovici and Lord Hugh Cecil never tired of observing—a mere "policy of preservation." It is, as Ludovici put it, also one of "discernment in change."

But conservatism also is usually skeptical of the unerring wisdom and justice of man. Although not necessarily and everywhere opposed to the expansion of the suffrage, or to constitutional as well as moral checks on government, most conservatives tend to doubt that we can solve problems of government through the merely *mechanical* processes of mass voting.

It does not follow that conservatives must advocate the rule of a class, just *any* kind of class, as some critics would have us believe. Yet—in its superior expressions—conservatism believes in the rule of those who are better endowed than others with a sense of social responsibility, justice, and political wisdom. History—as Gaetano Mosca, marshalling some persuasive evi-

dence to this effect, discerned—provides many illustrations of the rise of deserving elites and the fall of deficient ones. It should also be clear, at least since Mosca and Michels, that a ruling minority is an unavoidable social phenomenon, even in a democratic society. In contrast to what traditionally is called liberalism, the genuine conservative, who emerges as the *effective* spokesman or, sometimes, as the unhappily ineffective thinker of his group, is motivated by a realism that, in Reinhold Niebuhr's pregnant terminology, is "the product of experience which includes all the problems of man's collective life!" The conservative restricts policy, if I may quote Niebuhr a little further, "to limited and foreseeable ends," whereas the "modern liberal's penchant is for too wide and too sweeping objectives." (R. Niebuhr, "The Foreign Policy of American Conservatism and Liberalism," in *Christian Realism and Political Problems*, 1953, pp. 53-76). The sweeping illusions of the liberal mind are recognized by Kirk as manifestations of an ostrich-like quality particularly discernible in those sections of the American public which are under the influence of "Emersonian" ideals. Kirk in a parodising, yet not untruthful, statement sums up the occasional incompatibility of the theoretical ideals and the factual attitudes of the moralizing liberal. If a natural human shortcoming develops into a conspicuous evil, and "if it is geographically remote," or peculiar to a class other than our own, "solve it by surgery without anaesthetic; if it is close to home . . . —why, we must be mistaken" (*The Conservative Mind*, Chicago, 1953, p. 213). Reinhold Niebuhr, Wilson, Kirk, as well as many European conservative writers, stress "Christian humility" which must temper our judgment of fellow-men, but also must inform the judgment of our own limitations.

The dilemma of the "conservative mind," then, is of a different character. If all the elements of the *ideal* conservative are taken into consideration—i. e., breadth of experience, discrimination toward the phenome-

non of change, ethical realism, a sense of humility with regard to the natural self, responsibility in leadership, justice and political prudence—one cannot help wondering whether all or any of these qualities are present in those who, *on the scene of political action*, which is so ominously remote from theory, claim the title of conservatives. (Some of these traits are in accord with those which an ideal democracy also tries to realize. This proves that an ideal aristocracy and an ideal democracy are not necessarily contradictory, but supplementary, to each other.) Surely those character-values have nowhere and probably never found their universal, unmodified, and abiding political expression.

There is ever the chasm between the ideal and the real, which seems to represent the eternal judgment of History on all ambitious human enterprise. The history of Europe, more often than not, has been the story of the failure of so-called political elites, especially of those with *inherited* privileges: a fact which does not imply that the new artificial totalitarian and revolutionary "elites" on that continent are better than those which declined. Yet justice requires the acknowledgment of a further fact: that there were, particularly in Britain and in Germany, conservative minds with a fine sense of proportion, and a large following, who invariably voiced an effective opposition to the abuses of privilege. The "responsibilities of power," the "obligations of nobility" came to play a part in the thinking of the best representatives of this class. This did not save it from falling from power, because a) the abuses preceded and overshadowed the efforts of the responsible and wise; b) the class structure upon which European conservatism was founded rapidly and inevitably weakened and ultimately was undermined by the forces of a new and industrial order. Whether liberalism, as a succeeding and outwardly gentler principle, will be more lasting, is yet to be tested in the ungente laboratories of History.

European conservatism never knew a simple or universal formula. There were vast differences between the theories of British Tories and Continental conservatives, and there were similarly important differences between the ideas of, say, French and German conservatives. While the new American conservative writers draw much of their inspiration from British conservatism, they are unable to tell us how to copy the unique historical experience of Britain.

Yet, there is a degree of language and cultural affinity between Britain and America which lessens that feeling of strangeness so conspicuously present when we begin the discussion of Continental conservatism. I may be permitted, therefore, to concentrate my efforts on a very cursory and, may it be said, hastily sketched outline of French and German conservative thought.

Strange as it may seem, French rather than German conservative thought of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries laid the groundwork for the pseudo-conservative doctrines of Fascism and Nazism. Carlton H. Hayes, in his *The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism* (1931), tells much of this side of the story. (The oft-quoted and less often understood German Friedrich Nietzsche was not a conservative at all. No matter what other points there are of justified criticism of Nietzsche, his idea of aristocracy was completely revolutionary, anti-nationalist, and, in a profound sense, anti-political. Still, Nietzsche, whose popularized version alternately has been used and distorted by French nationalists, German Nazis, and even American business apologists, will probably continue to suffer the undeserved fate of being a "dead Nazi" or a "reactionary conservative" or a champion of American business practice, whatever the occasion may call for).

French conservatism was a reaction from the Jacobin illusions of the Great French Revolution and, later, from the defeat of 1870-71. It had that quality of resentment

and bitterness toward the total environment which characterizes most conservative movements that aim at the restoration of a fallen order. (This quality also was conspicuously present in the German Nationalist People's Party, the successor of the German Conservative Party after the fall of their Empire, and it is just as conspicuously absent from the general atmosphere of British conservatism.) Hippolyte Taine, Maurice Barrès, and Charles Maurras, its most articulate exponents, developed partly philosophical, partly pseudo-philosophical ideas in refutation of the basic concepts of "the liberal revolution." Taine (1828-1893) founded his theory on what he called "the positive fact of force," and he attacked the "metaphysical concepts" of the "general will," the "social contract" and the "consent of the governed," which had ruled the French Revolution. These abstract formulas seemed to ignore the reality of what he considered "natural conflicts." He sought a return to the observance of the "organic rules of society." These, according to him, consisted in rule by an aristocracy, French nationalism tempered by regionalism, and a consciousness of race. In regard to the latter, he borrowed from his fellow countryman Arthur de Gobineau the concept of an "Aryan race," and he outdid Gobineau in attributing to it qualities of superiority over "Semitic and Chinese races," an assumption which later was destined to play a special part in the thinking and actions of a regime of a different nation.

In contrast to the British and, to a smaller extent, the German conservative principle of admitting to the ranks of nobility members of the lower classes who have distinguished themselves, the idea of the ruling class has rather rigid connotations in the thinking of Taine and Maurras, while Barrès tends toward the ideal of a "Caesarian Republic" along the lines of Napoleon III's plebiscitarian monarchy and an aristocracy by merit rather than birth.

Maurice Barrès (1862-1923) in his

early trilogy *Le Culte du Moi* (1887-1891) had misunderstood Nietzsche as advocating a doctrine of the supremacy of the Ego, and he did not hesitate to apply this doctrine to his own philosophy. From this point he might easily have developed into an anarchist, but his later works (*Le Roman de l'Energie Nationale*, 3 vols., 1897-1903; *Scènes et Doctrines du Nationalisme*, 1902; *Une Enquête au Pays du Levant*, 1923, etc.) furnish proof that he had turned toward social psychology. His mental makeup apparently did not allow him to be anything but an extremist, and he developed, without apparent transition, from the position of an extreme individualist to that of a radical nationalist. Basic to his ideas is a rigid psychological and racial determinism. A person's psychological processes, according to him, are predetermined by the hazard of belonging to a certain family and a certain race. Associated with this idea is a cult of ancestry which he preached. "The dead of one's family or nationality are more powerful than the living and more to be honored." The chief aid to the cult of ancestors is the cult of the native soil where they lived and breathed. The best patriots, in Barrès' view, are the masses of simple folk who live close to the soil. Who, in reading Barrès, is not reminded of the "blood and soil" theory of a later nationalist in a neighboring country? Barrès' anti-intellectualism provides another parallel to German Nazism. So does his extreme anti-Semitism. His definition of a nation is "the possession in common of an ancient cemetery and the will to keep its heritage undivided and to make it influential" (*Scènes et Doctrines du Nationalisme*, p. 108).

Intellectuals are termed *déracinés*, persons who cut themselves off from their native soil and family line, are at home anywhere, and thereby lose their racial identity. There also is no place in France for the foreign-born and their children. "Naturalized citizenship" is a psychological impossibility. Religion is useful as long

as it is *French* religion and is not devoted to exaggerated otherworldly claims, for the chief claim upon a person is held by his country. Insofar as the Catholic Church is a *French* institution, it serves a useful purpose. In this connection he coins these shockingly pragmatic words: "*Je suis athée, mais naturellement, je suis catholique*" ("I am an atheist, but, of course, I am also a Catholic.").

Barrès' nationalist program includes the acceptance of war as an instrument of national policy in foreign and colonial matters. Barrès' chief motivation probably was his hatred of Germany. In *Scènes et Doctrines du Nationalisme* he states: "Nationalism is the noble instinct of revenge" (p. 298). And in *Les Amitiés Françaises* he points out that he even was doubtful "whether Germans possess souls" (p. 86).

Overseas imperialism he repeatedly stated to have become one of the French traditions which it was the duty of conservatives to preserve and develop.

Charles Maurras (1868-1952), like Barrès, was educated at Catholic schools. At the age of twenty, he joined Barrès' group. Like Barrès, his works became bestsellers in the France of the Third Republic. He became one of the Immortals of the Académie Française, to be ousted from it only after proof of his collaboration with the Nazis during World War II.

During the Dreyfus crisis in the eighteen-nineties, he founded the Action Française, an activist movement for the restoration of the monarchy, to which was attached a militant group of youthful followers, the *camelots du roi*. These two organizations later became the model upon which the Fascist and Nazi movements organized their militants.

Maurras is the father of what he called *nationalisme intégrale*. He leans heavily on Barrès' psychological determinism. As for the basic traditions of France, Maurras in general agrees with Barrès and refers to regionalism or provincialism, the Catholic religion, the monarchy, *hereditary* hostility to Germany, *hereditary* fondness for

overseas expansion, as worthy objects of conservative aspirations. But he provides some oddly logical foundations for his theories, which manage to clarify his position more fully than that of Barrès:

The demon that has been imperiling the traditional order of France is none other than "individualism." This is a foreign intruder, an offspring of what he termed "Hebrew Christianity" and "German idealism." Christ was a Jew. His teaching of equality and humility is a dangerous weapon of the weak. (This part of Maurras' argument is obviously borrowed from Nietzsche.) Kant's precepts of "individual morality," duty and justice are quite as dangerous. "In examining the history of the social structure . . . one is impressed with the social nature of man, not with his will; with the reality of things, not with their justice" (*La Politique Religieuse*, pp. 78-9).

Despite his intrinsic paganism and opposition to Christ, Maurras, like Barrès before him, was an energetic defender of the Catholic Church. His peculiar explanation of this paradoxical fact runs as follows: Catholicism arises from the powerful organizing genius of ancient Rome. It has become a potent tool of French social solidarity. It is an essential part of the French past and tradition. The Catholic God is a myth, but the Catholic Church is a "useful" instrument. In its *organizational* aspects, Catholicism is not Hebrew, but Roman and French. It permits a certain amount of love and sympathy; but, unlike "Hebrew Christianity," it does not let "these dangerous tendencies" get out of hand (*La Politique Religieuse*, p. 269).

Finally, restoration of the Bourbon Monarchy alone can drive Jews, Protestants, Freemasons, and foreigners from power. Napoleon III, as well as the Republic, permitted them to be there. The "Caesarian Republic" of Napoleon, like a democratic republic, in the last analysis rests on democratic elections. Elections, said Maurras, can perhaps reflect the sum of particular interests, but it is difficult to think of the

national interest as merely the sum of particular interests. The Bourbon Monarchy alone is organically and historically a part of the "true France."

In judging the leaders of French literary conservatism, it must be remembered that they wrote in a spirit of resentment and revenge prompted by revolution and defeat; that apart perhaps from the prevailing spirit of revenge toward Germany and at least since the years of the Dreyfus scandal, actual French politics was little influenced by the ambitions and the social resentment of these writers.

Turning to the subject of *German* conservatism thought one is impressed by the standards of many of the leading writers, the confusion of actual politics since Bismarck, and the deterioration of genuine conservative tradition within the German Nationalist People's Party under the guidance of industrialists like Hugenberg during the unhappy Weimar period.

Space does not permit me to probe into all of these topics. I therefore simply register my personal opinion that Bismarck, in spite of his determination to defend inherited privilege and Prussia's leadership in German affairs, was a realist whose purpose it was in the field of foreign politics to keep on good terms with both Britain and Russia. Once he had attained German unification at the price of wars, he was careful not to challenge the world powers by rivaling their imperialism, and he cautiously refrained from rousing British apprehensions by building a strong German Navy. These safeguards were abandoned by his successors. Bismarck's realism, however, faltered at some crucial points in the realm of internal German affairs, and it was here that he encountered uncompromising opposition at the hands of such stanchly conservative writers as Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach (1795-1877), Heinrich Leo (1799-1878), and others.

Even before the Bismarck era, Friedrich Julius Stahl (1802-1861), one of the founders of the conservative movement in Prus-

sia, had formulated the role of religion, not as a convenient tool for preserving the national tradition (as the Frenchmen Barrès and Maurras, as well as more "*practical-minded*" Prussian conservatives of a later day saw it), but as an abiding obligation, an end in itself. Stahl's conservatism was founded in the ethical belief in the primacy of the individual over and above all "natural and historic ties." As the two older Frenchmen Montesquieu and Tocqueville can rightfully be claimed as ancestors of both modern liberal and conservative thought, so Baron von Stein, Stahl, and Gerlach occasionally appear in both roles, and it may be said that while there is a *tension* between humanistic liberalism and enlightened conservatism, they need not be exclusive of each other. If it is true, as Peter Viereck maintains (*Conservatism Revisited*, New York, 1949, p. 13), that "a Burkean conservative opposes tyranny from above as well as below," then those nineteenth-century Prussian conservative thinkers have much in common both with the British conservative tradition and our new American writers on conservatism.

German conservatism was Prussian and Protestant rather than German and nationalist in origin. It was a professed and deliberate movement in defense of "Thron und Altar" (throne and church) and of the privileges of the Protestant landed aristocracy (Junkers). It owed its existence, as did conservative movements everywhere in Europe, to the fear of the forces unleashed by the French Revolution of 1789. Junkers, with those who believed in their special right and ability to administer the affairs of the state and to command the army, constituted the rank and file of the Prussian Conservative Party. After the German defeat of World War I, the throne had disappeared, and faith in the ability of the Prussian aristocracy had sustained a severe shock. The *new* conservative party (the German Nationalist) was ruled by industrialists and businessmen, who previously had sought their political representation in a nominally liberal party (the *na-*

tionalliberale). Simultaneously, the new party developed characteristics of a flatly nationalistic, racist, and *ressentiment* type akin to the French conservative-monarchist movement prior to World War II. Eventually the "conservative" businessmen sold out to the nihilist Hitler, whom they erroneously believed to be a trustworthy partner in the business of maintaining what they called "national traditions," but what in fact did not transcend their narrowly-conceived business interests.

The most effective and valiant resistance to Hitler eventually developed, not from industry, business, labor, liberals, socialists, or communists, but from conservatives of the old Prussian tradition, who quietly had preserved the strict moral codes and Christian faith of the outstanding writers of traditional conservatism. (See, for instance, Hans Rothfels, *The German Resistance to Hitler*, 1949. This is an obsolete description, but it is one of the very few dispassionate ones available in English). I do not refer to those dime-a-dozen "patriots" who eventually deserted Hitler because they felt he was about to "lose the war for Germany," or simply because they wanted to save their own hides. I refer to the best of what was left in Germany, who deliberately sacrificed and died for a principle; to those who conspired because they felt that pseudo-conservative business as well as Hitlerism had betrayed and destroyed what was the nation's most precious and moral heritage.

In order to clarify this, let me briefly touch upon some of the basic ideas of Von Gerlach, which inspired the faith of the conservative resistance. Not being an adherent to this or any type of Prussian conservative philosophy, I hope I can do so without personal bias. In the so-called *Junkerparlament* of 1848 in Prussia there were two blocs of conservatives, one representing the material self-interest of the privileged Junkers, the other, under the leadership of Gerlach and his friends, emphasizing the responsibilities of a privileged position. Gerlach, who soon emerged

as the leading figure in this Parliament, declared:

"Privilege and property as merely material means of enjoyment are not sacred, but shabby. Only in the context of their responsibilities are they sacred. . . . Merely to preserve, to be negative, to turn one's back to the seedy side of life, and to demand protection from the omnipotent state—this is something which may be forgiven [others]. . . . Let us never forget that it should be the duty of the nobility to set an example and to make noble the nation as a whole" (cit. from Hans Joachim Schoeps, *Das Andere Preussen*, Stuttgart, 1952, pp. 67-8). These may still be considered words of a typically caste-conscious Prussian aristocrat. But listen to this: "Any system of law which simply prescribes law instead of trying to seek justice, is revolutionary rather than conservative, no matter how much conservatism it claims for itself" (*ibid.*, p. 31). "To make the state omnipotent is a denial of God. It renders meaningless any kind of oath" (p. 115). "In all my this-worldly ambitions, I am a Prussian, yet I must say that to me Prussia as well as Germany rank far below The Kingdom of God" (p. 76). To Bismarck's policy of annexation after the Austrian-Prussian War in 1866 he responded with a simple quote: "Thou shalt not steal!" and followed through with the statement that it is "painful to behold how my fatherland Prussia violates the Ten Commandments and how it is taking injury to its soul and corrupting its conscience through a form of pseudo-patriotism" (p. 45). Following Stahl's footsteps, he recognized "powerful truths in constitutionalism" and was not afraid of a "total representation of all the people" in Prussia where there was only class representation favoring the privileged few. Still, he uttered typically conservative doubts concerning the wisdom of "mass judgments."

The tragedy of Prussian-German conservatism is the constant state of tension between religiously-informed and plainly utilitarian tendencies within it. In the bat-

tle between them, the utilitarian spirit finally won. Even Gerlach's friend Heinrich Leo reflected this tension in his own writing. On one hand, he admirably confessed that "it is a moral-spiritual element which makes and breaks the nations" (p. 186). On the other, he is the inventor of that horrible word of "war as a frolic" (*frischfröhlicher Krieg*). Eventually there appears the historian Heinrich von Treitschke, the renegade Prussian from the land of Saxony, who probably exercised more spiritual influence on succeeding generations of German youth than any conservative before him. Treitschke idolized Machiavelli and worshipped the power of the state. All progress of culture is due to the state, the efforts of the individual are meaningless without it. There is a striking similarity between the teachings of Treitschke and those of the Englishman Bernard Bosanquet, but the latter could not match the popular effectiveness of Treitschke. His was a pagan philosophy which somehow corresponded to the spirit of the materially successful of the Second Reich. Yet even Treitschke, who today, and justly so, stands accused as being one of the intellectual godfathers of Nazism, expressed thoughts which are worlds apart from the totalitarian Nazi creed. In *Die Freiheit* (Leipzig, 1861) he exclaims: "There are personal values so high and intangible that no state has the right to subject them to its will" (*ibid.*, p. 15); and "The respect which the state renders to the person and his liberty, is the clearest yardstick of its culture" (*ibid.*, p. 20). There are in Treitschke's main work *Politik* (1897-1898) similar seemingly inconsistent passages which prove him occasionally to be at variance both with the French integral nationalists, who *theoretically* proclaimed the national interest to be exclusive of all individual and humane values, and the German Nazis, who *practiced* this latter doctrine.

Today German conservatism is all but dead. Hitler took care of all those who

might have developed into its forceful and logical leaders. The lone effective champion of Prussian conservatism today is an orthodox German Jew, whose parents died in a Nazi concentration camp, and who teaches History of Religion and Ethical Culture in the Bavarian University of Erlangen: Hans Joachim Schoeps. That one of the primary victims of German Nazism should find it possible to dedicate his life to the resuscitation of that portion of Prussian mentality which was embodied in Ludwig von Gerlach, is perhaps strange and pathetic, but to Schoeps it is a matter of conviction and — drastic personal experience. He remembers the insecurity of the Weimar Republic, with its whimsical mass moods that created the phenomenon of Hitler as vividly as he remembers the horrors of the Third Reich. (It was a pitiful commentary on the standards of some of our American representatives abroad that in 1951 at least one high official in the High Commissioner's Office in Germany disdainfully and naïvely dismissed Schoeps in conversation with me as "a Jewish Nazi.")

German conservatism began as a party movement of aristocrats. It ended as an organization of business interests which fraternized with Hitler in the hope that he would suppress labor as well as humanistic liberalism.

What comparisons can be drawn between Continental and American conservatism?

The first is that there is in this country no conservative movement in the continental sense. Some indications of the racism of the French and of the latter-day German conservatism can be found here, but they have little or no *intellectual* bearing in this country. There is no tradition of monarchy or of aristocracy here, at least not in the European sense. In a summary fashion, one may speak of both the Republican and the Democratic Parties as conservative parties, or one may point out that the split between what is called conservative and liberal tendencies runs

through both major parties. These ideas are commonplace.

What perhaps is less understood by our politicians on both sides of the more or less imaginary fence is that both parties are imbued with the spirit of the Enlightenment which kindled the flames of the American as well as the French Revolution; both parties believe in Locke and Montesquieu as well as the liberal school of economic thought. A few more on the Democratic side than on the Republican, for the time being at least, believe also that liberal concepts imply a more equal distribution of income, and that moderate government interference to that effect is justified. Very few of them do believe in out-and-out socialism, although their influence in labor unions and schools should not be underrated. On the other hand, more Republicans than Democrats are fascinated by the virtues of a *laissez-faire* economy. But in this young Republic there is still the blessing of a common basis of understanding. There would be no feeling of mutual resentment or revenge so characteristic of the European-Continental political scene, had we not invented, in the absence of a real ideological struggle and as convenient substitutes for deeper politi-

cal thought, the devices of name-calling, of stereotyping individuals, of unwarranted branding of persons and legitimate efforts as "communist", "socialist", "reactionary" or "fascist."

The dominant spirit of the liberal Enlightenment, which both parties still claim and share, seems to single out America for the role of a champion of liberal-conservative traditions, a combination to which we have alluded as being anything but a paradox, and which Kirk, Viereck, and Niebuhr aptly stress. With Niebuhr, however, I cannot help entertaining grave doubts as to whether the moral and deeply spiritual values of America can endure without a religious base. And we must ask whether we have learned a lesson from the European experience; namely, that mere negativism — be it in the form of opposition to inevitable change or of excessive preoccupation with danger to *material* possessions or privileges — is not enough. Finally, how secure are our people from being deluded by demagogues who may fit the role of what Gerlach labeled as "pseudo-conservatives" and who may be bent on betraying — as others did in Germany — not only all liberal but all *spiritually* based conservative values?

ATOMIC TESTING

The recent petitions and manifestos against the testing of atomic weapons are analyzed by two calm scholars.

Atomic Testing as an International Issue

ARTHUR KEMP

DEMAGOGUES AND PROPAGANDISTS frolic like dolphins in the seas of ignorance, and their delight seems to increase directly with the murkiness of the waters. An examination of the past two years' out-pourings of assertion, opinion, warnings, threats, forebodings, and sermons about the risks and wickedness of nuclear weapons testing will clearly sustain the validity of that assertion. There has been an international hue and cry of large proportion, ranging from official communications by the executive heads of powerful nations to statements, requested or not, by various committees, federations, organizations, and individual evangelists. Some of these activities resemble certain pre-War propaganda — particularly by certain committees active in 1939, prior to the Hitler-Stalin non-aggression pact.

Petitions and resolutions are signed by scientists, by students, by faculty members, by ministers, by church councils — all appeal, with varying degrees of emotion, for "a cessation of bomb testing." The names of some of these groups reveal only a little of their composition: Federation of American Scientists, Pugwash Conference of Nuclear Scientists, Friends' Committee

on National Legislation, Mennonite Central Committee, Brethren Service Committee, Universalist Church of America, Committee Against Nuclear Explosions, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Non-violent Action Against Nuclear Weapons, Committee for Nuclear Disarmament, Walk-for-Peace Committee, and the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy. The list is by no means exhaustive.

These groups have organized rallies, mass picketing, and other demonstrations. Students and faculty members in several countries have demonstrated on college and university campuses. In Great Britain a large-scale rally was held in London's Trafalgar Square and a mass parade marched on Aldermaston, the United Kingdom's center for research on nuclear weapons. In Germany, a labor union group threatened to strike if the government were to accept nuclear weapons from NATO.

Individuals and small groups, too, have joined the chorus as soloists, trios, or quartets. Such contributions range from Albert Schweitzer's Declaration of Conscience, to the four pacifists who attempted to sail their thirty-foot ketch, significantly named the *Golden Rule*, into the Eniwetok

testing zone in open defiance of a United States Federal court injunction against such action. The avowed purpose of their action was to protest nuclear weapons tests scheduled in April, 1958, by the United States. These varying actions, by their size or vociferousness, by injuries sustained, if any, by jail sentences received for openly defying the law and the courts, were aimed at altering a national policy determined in an established legal manner by duly elected legislators and administrators.

Few, if any, people, short of avowed anarchists, will propose seriously that national policies should be established and decided by means of mass demonstrations, picketing, strikes, marches, parades, or martyrdom. But, quite naturally, public apprehension concerning atomic fall-out and other radiation hazards is greatly increased by such pressures and publicity.

It would be most comforting if we could blame these demonstrations on the Communists alone — and doubtless they have fostered and made the most of them. But, like Arab nationalism and revolution in the Near East, and the stoning of Vice-President Nixon in Venezuela, to blame it all on the Communists is a convenient but oversimplified explanation. It is likely, too, that in doing so the Western powers might deceive themselves. A vast majority of people everywhere devoutly hope that neither conventional nor nuclear weapons will ever be employed. Only a few understand the nature of the awesome power man has discovered — and people fear what they do not understand.

Unfortunately, too, people have an almost unlimited propensity for believing the untrue, even the obviously false. It is not surprising, therefore, to find Communists and fellow travelers thoroughly enmeshed in the propaganda concerning atomic testing, in an attempt to portray themselves as advocates of abolishing these terrible weapons of destruction in contrast to the evil, heartless, capitalist-militarists who would damage irreparably this and future generations by their inhuman poli-

cies. Soviet belief in the value of propaganda along this line is clearly indicated by the announcement, in March, 1958, of its intention to abandon nuclear weapons tests provided the Western powers did not continue testing. How significant was the timing of that announcement! It came at the end of a series of *unannounced* Soviet tests and just before the start of a series of American tests, publicly announced months before. Perhaps world opinion is less gullible than the Soviets believe, but there is little doubt that some propaganda advantage was obtained by the announcement, particularly in Germany, India and Japan.

The basic facts of atomic radiation, fortunately, are not difficult to understand. Risks are not confined to radioactive substances of nuclear fission, whether in weapons testing or atomic power reactors. Radiation occurs as a part of our cosmic background, in medical treatment, and from unstable radioactive elements as they decay toward stable conditions. A lay observer need not become an expert on radiation and its effects in order to understand the current discussions. The technical literature is voluminous, but there is enough of the non-technical to enable any literate person to recognize the importance of the questions involved and something of the reason for the wide difference of both technical and non-technical opinion.

The fundamental problems lie beyond facts, or even conjecture. Most scientists, whether physical, natural or behavioral, would agree that it is possible and useful to distinguish positive from so-called normative science. That is, it is useful to distinguish an effort to discover what *is* from an effort to set up criteria for judging what *ought to be*. Positive science is independent of particular ethical or ideological judgements; ethics is not a positive science, probably not a science at all. But scientists are also human beings possessing, consciously or unconsciously, ethical opinions. Frequently, too, there is some confusion between positive science and norma-

tive science, particularly noticeable where questions of policy are involved.

To state the two basic questions involved in the atomic testing issue: (1) Will continued atomic testing, peaceful or military, constitute a serious threat to mankind now or in the future? (2) If so, to what extent, if at all, should mankind continue to test?

It should be apparent that these questions are beyond the technical competence of positive science to answer. Differing answers occur because people have fundamental differences in ethical values or because they are reasoning from variant unproved, and perhaps unprovable, hypotheses. Of these two sources of difference, the former is less likely to be resolved by an appeal to scientific evidence or experiment. Indeed, they can be settled only by voluntary agreement or by fighting it out. The two questions raised above are quite likely to fall in this category. What constitutes a *serious* threat? What risks are involved in a cessation of tests? Is individual human life the ultimate value?

It will help to distinguish as clearly as possible the reasons for divergence of opinion, particularly among scientists. There exists rather more evidence than is generally recognized, and the essence of what there is can be readily understood.

Recognition of the existence of radiation hazards stems from the turn of the century, if not earlier. It is now well known that man was always subjected to natural radioactivity from cosmic radiation and, more recently, has been subjected to increased radiation from medical and dental x-ray. Following World War I, many medical authorities in hospitals and elsewhere recognized the need for increased radiological protection. As early as 1925 there was an attempt to accomplish this internationally by cooperative formation of the International Commission on Radiological Protection. The passing of time brought increased medical use, atomic weapons, weapons testing and the threat of their use, and the possibility of the development, on an international scale, of a major industry produc-

ing electric power from atomic fuel. At present, radiation problems are very small, but are likely to grow as the employment of nuclear fuels increases, regardless of the question of weapon testing. The question is less significant concerning present effects than the future effects from an increased radiation background caused by man's own radiation producing activities.

There are several major sources of scientific opinion, information and evidence. One is a report by the British Medical Council, a second by the National Academy of Sciences, a very recent United Nations report on radioactive fall-out, and a four volume study by the Atomic Energy Commission's Health and Safety Laboratory. The latter is not yet generally available but, when published, will be the most complete collection of factual evidence yet available on the subject of radioactive fall-out. Entitled *The Biological Effects of Radiation*, the National Academy of Sciences report is divided into six parts: (1) genetics; (2) pathology; (3) agriculture and food supplies; (4) meteorology; (5) oceanography and fisheries; (6) disposal of radioactive waste. It summarizes, in terms quite understandable by non-technical readers, what science has learned thus far about the potential effects of radiation — about as much as scientists are able to provide with confidence. To quote briefly from the report:

It is generally agreed that, in the peacetime development of atomic energy, man has been lucky. He has been dealing with an enormous new force whose potential effects he has only dimly understood. Thus far, except for some tragic accidents affecting small numbers of people, the biological damage from peacetime activities (including the testing of atomic weapons) has been essentially negligible. Furthermore, it appears that radiation problems, if they are met intelligently and vigilantly, need not stand in the way of large scale development of atomic energy. The con-

tinuing need for intelligence and vigilance cannot be too strongly emphasized.¹

It will be apparent to the casual reader of daily newspapers that there are differences among scientists even as to such a carefully worded statement as this, or at least some differences in emphasis. Controversy over atomic weapons testing has revealed the lack of technical agreement.

There are, for example, substantial areas of scientific ignorance. One such is the question of genetic effects of abnormal, harmful mutations caused by Cesium-137, a substance in fall-out capable of acting upon human reproductive cells. Atomic testing activities, or atomic accidents, may increase the number of defective individuals born in future generations. Exact estimates of the long-run effects are not available. We have only some informed guesses that one child in 20,000 may be affected — subject to a wide margin of error. A major difficulty is that humanity's genetic condition is not static, but dynamic; it will be difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish small shifts due to changes in radiation background, or to ascribe any one case to radiation from bomb tests, x-rays, or other radiation source. The total amount of radiation from bomb tests thus far is about one-tenth that received from x-rays. Future study and experimentation may reduce the areas of ignorance by supplying evidence on whether an irradiated population becomes stronger, remains the same, or deteriorates. But this will take a long time.

A second area of ignorance exists concerning the danger of Strontium-90, another radioactive substance. In certain atomic explosions, Strontium-90 eventually falls to earth and may be absorbed in varying amounts by grass or other plants. Animals, or fish, eating such plants may, in turn, receive and pass on some of the radioactive substance and thus it may be assimilated into human bone. A high concentration of radioactive strontium in hu-

man bone is thought to be one cause of bone cancer and leukemia. But it is not known whether the same probability of bone cancer would hold true for a very much smaller concentration — perhaps one ten-thousandth of the known danger level. On the basis of existing evidence, it cannot be ascertained to what extent, or even whether or not, bone cancer can be caused by low level atomic test radiation.

The American and British governments' decisions to continue testing atomic weapons until an acceptable agreement is reached, with provision for detection of violations, often appears to place these Western powers in a weak propaganda position. But this results, at least in part, from the way decisions are reached in a free society, in contrast to those of a totalitarian regime. In a free society, independent judgements are not merely permitted but often encouraged, whether "scientific" or not. Indeed, these differences constitute the greatest strength of freedom in the long run. When decisions are reached by political dictates from above, however, there is a greater impression of unanimity and, in foreign policy, there is much less necessity for the totalitarian regime to mean what it says. Stalin's famous comment on diplomacy is pertinent: "To have sincere diplomacy is no more possible than to have dry water or wooden iron." Those nations, organizations or individuals who have advocated the simple abolition of atomic weapons testing without concerning themselves with the intricacies of inspection, or controls, or enforcement, are able to appeal emotionally to man's deep seated longing to be free from threats of major destructive forces.

One viewpoint advocating such simple abolition wells up from pacifism. If one maintains that nothing can justify the use of armed force, the position taken is morally defensible, whether one agrees with it or not. Indeed, there are those who argue that nothing justifies the use of hydrogen weapons — even the risk of Communist domination of all the world. This view

has been expressed, for example, by Philip Toynbee, son of the famed historian, Arnold Toynbee, and by philosopher Bertrand Russell, among many others less well known. This appears less defensible than the pure pacifist position, however, for it would appear that the basic evil is the destruction of human life rather than the nature of the particular instrument of destruction employed. Moreover, others may assign a greater evil to the destruction of human dignity than to the destruction of human life. There exists no generally acceptable scale on which to weigh the relative merits of variant ethical positions.

Further opposition to atomic testing either stems from partisan politics or is actively aided and abetted by it. On May 12, 1956, in a speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, Adlai Stevenson advocated that the United States "voluntarily suspend further tests of H-bombs and ask Russia to do likewise." On October 15, 1956, speaking as the Democratic candidate for President, Mr. Stevenson proposed "that all countries concerned halt further tests of large-size nuclear weapons that we usually call H-bombs," and that the United States "take the lead in establishing this world policy." Some scientists hastened to support him by a petition. Not to be left out, the then Soviet Premier, Bulganin, promptly sent a letter to President Eisenhower pointing unmistakably to the Stevenson speech and proposing "the prohibition of testing atomic and hydrogen weapons" — without suggesting any inspection system. Mr. Eisenhower's reply was pointed; he accused Bulganin of "an interference by a foreign nation in our internal affairs which, if indulged in by an ambassador, would lead to his being declared *persona non grata* . . ." The position of the political parties on atomic testing thus became one of the major issues of the 1956 domestic presidential campaign as well as an international issue. Perhaps there is a lesson in this for those who believe that partisan politics can, in fact, end at the water's edge.

It is small wonder, considering the differences concerning the policy of weapons testing rooted in ignorance, ethics and politics, that there are varying opinions among scientists also. In July, 1957, at a convention of the American Newspaper Editors in San Francisco, Harrison Brown, of California Institute of Technology, called for a cessation of atomic weapons testing lest "industrial civilization perish in a nuclear holocaust." On the same program another scientist, the late Mark Mills of the University of California Radiation Laboratory, urged that testing be continued, and asserted that a failure to develop a "clean" H-bomb would "constitute a crime against humanity." He also charged that much of the opposition to bomb testing stemmed from Soviet propaganda aimed at depriving the United States of military strength. Professor Linus Pauling, of California Institute of Technology, speaking at a rally of the Committee Against Nuclear Explosions, was reported as saying that a single super-bomb, such as the one the United States exploded in March, 1954, would "in the course of our lifetime cause 15,000 deaths from leukemia," and that radiation from tests conducted thus far would reduce life-expectancy of "one million persons by ten years." On the other hand, Dr. Shields Warren, cancer expert at Boston's famed Deaconess Hospital, asserted that, even if weapons testing continued for thirty years, the genetic dose would be "still insignificant and only a fraction of background [radiation]."

These examples of differences among scientists could be multiplied. Out of the heat of the discussions, however, two scientists have emerged as leaders of opposing points of view: Edward Teller, Professor of Physics at the University of California at Berkeley, a leader in developing the H-bomb, and Linus Pauling, Professor of Chemistry at California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, a Nobel laureate in Chemistry. Dr. Pauling has worked actively against atomic testing for several years;

he circulated an appeal in 1956 and 1957, signed by more than two thousand American scientists by June of 1957, to which scientists of other nations were invited to subscribe. Some two hundred members of the Soviet Academy of Sciences signed the petition and, so far as can be determined, there have been no reports of disagreement within the academy. Eugene Rabinowitch, editor of *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, and actively opposed to bomb testing, thought it necessary, in the November issue, to warn the Soviet scientists editorially to avoid using the Pauling international appeal as a propaganda drive. Ultimately, more than 9,200 scientists (the term is not defined explicitly) from many countries as well as the United States signed the petition which was then handed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in January, 1958.

This activity apparently goaded Dr. Teller to express forcefully the scientific authority and opinion for continued nuclear testing. In the January (1958) issue of *Foreign Affairs*, the February 10 issue of *Life*, and as co-author with Albert L. Latter of *Our Nuclear Future* (Criterion Books, 1958), he argued that many of the Pauling statements were at best half-truths, misleading and dangerous; that nuclear tests are not a serious hazard; and that renunciation of nuclear testing by the Western nations would provide an excellent opportunity for Communist aggression.

On February 20, 1958, Pauling and Teller participated in a debate on "Fallout and Disarmament" over station KQED San Francisco, filmed for national distribution, and the text distributed in printed form by Fearon Publishers, San Francisco.

One of the strange facts about this scientific clash is that there is virtually no mention of any possible ideological conflict. Yet it is not difficult to demonstrate that, in general, those scientists most actively engaged in circulating petitions, or other actions aimed at protesting atomic testing, have also been those engaging most fre-

quently in political activities toward the left end of the political spectrum. Of course there are individual exceptions. But it would have been possible to anticipate that Dr. Pauling would be found in the vanguard of opposition to atomic testing not by his scientific works, but by his political and ideological activities.

Some of these activities were compiled by the House Un-American Activities Committee in a report issued in April, 1951, titled "The Communist 'Peace' Offensive." It lists such Pauling activities as sponsoring the Scientific and Cultural Conference for World Peace in 1949, sponsoring the Conference on Peaceful Alternatives to the Atlantic Pact, signing numerous statements in the *Daily Worker* and the *Daily Peoples World* on behalf of eleven Communist leaders convicted for teaching the advocacy of overthrow of the government by force and violence, signing a petition in behalf of Hanns Eisler, brother of Gerhart Eisler, protesting his deportation, and other acts of a similar nature. In fact, the House Committee publication (p. 86) asserted, "Professor Pauling has not deviated a hair's breadth from this pattern of loyalty to the Communist cause since 1946."

Let there be no misunderstanding. It is not my intention to imply that Dr. Pauling is a Communist party member. He has denied it under oath. He has achieved high honors in his profession: in addition to the Nobel Prize in Chemistry, he is a member of the French Academy of Medicine, a winner of the Phillips Medal of the American College of Physicians, a past president of the American Chemical Society, and was honored with a membership in the Soviet Academy of Sciences in 1958. Dr. Pauling's contributions are impressive indeed, but it is difficult not to conclude the gentleman is a dupe.

Disregarding any ideological or political differences as a source of differing opinion among scientists, a colleague of Dr. Pauling, and a past president of the American Association for Advancement

of Science, Professor George W. Beadle, California Institute of Technology, explained part of the misunderstanding by reference to different hypotheses:

If one takes the position that the probability of war can be reduced most effectively by a build-up of nuclear weapons to the point that no nation will dare use them, one tends to argue that the biological hazards of bomb testing are of such relative insignificance that they can be disregarded.

On the other hand, if one is strongly convinced that such a build-up of nuclear weapons, involving ultimately many nations, will greatly increase the chance of nuclear war, there is an almost irresistible tendency to bolster the position with arguments that sound scientific but are not.²

One is tempted, rather facetiously, to remark that instead of having too few scientists, as some have suggested, our trouble may lie in having too many pseudoscientists. For myself, I do not regret the lack of unanimity in scientific opinion. Scientists are also individual citizens with full right to enter the political arena and to express themselves in a forceful way—as citizens. A free society, of course, needs *all* the facts, including those concerning the affiliations and associations of those who enter the political arena. With such knowledge, in the fire of differing opinion and the hammer of controversy, a free society forges policy decisions. Such policies, forged in such a manner, are likely to be the best policies for a free society most of the time. There is danger in the implication, seldom explicitly stated, that a scientific élite is better equipped because of scientific knowledge on non-scientific questions — ethical, religious, ideological, political, economic. I should have much greater concern if there *were* unanimity of scientific opinion on the question of atomic testing. The free market of individual ideas and opinions has aided the development of science by compelling the

scholar to examine his own prejudices, to sharpen his tools of analysis, and to strengthen his arguments. Therein lies a major strength of a free society — a strength no centrally directed regime can achieve.

There is some rather unexpected support of this in an article by Stevan Dedijer in *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* (September, 1957). Dedijer warned fellow scientists in the Western world that the Soviet Union's successes in military technology should not be taken as proof that a dictatorship is more efficient than a free, democratic society. Dedijer, incidentally, had a doctor's degree from Princeton, was a former member of the American Communist Party, and was removed from his job with the Yugoslavian Federal Commission on Nuclear Energy for "technical incompetence." The removal came after the appearance of the article.

Pressures exerted by the discussions, debates and mass actions, pro and con atomic testing, doubtless contributed something to bringing about the meeting of atomic experts in session at Geneva, Switzerland even as this is being written. Delegates from both Communist and Western countries are attempting to determine if weapons tests can be detected and, if so, how, and what kind of detection systems can be used to determine, beyond reasonable doubt, violation of an international agreement to cease atomic testing.

The scientists have difficult questions to answer. But even more difficult are the political questions. It seems probable that the Soviet Union wishes to outlaw atomic testing either in the hope that the Western countries will be lulled into a sense of security against atomic war, or because the existing relationship of atomic weapons power is to Soviet advantage while further development would be to its disadvantage.

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Soviet Union and its allies, with much greater total manpower, would possess a superior military strength to that of the Western powers. Aggression requires the massing of troops, planes, weapons and supplies for attack. To be able to destroy such concentrations easily and without the danger of widespread radioactive fall-out is advantageous to those fearing aggression, but is of little or no relative advantage to potential aggressors; in fact, this may be a decided disadvantage by making it possible for a small number to withstand a much stronger force numerically. There may be an economic advantage also if, as seems likely, the cost of maintaining a given number of men under arms is relatively higher for the west than for the Soviets. Like the Colt revolver during the opening of the American western frontier in the 19th century, a small hydrogen weapon with little or no radioactive fall-out can assume a similar role as "the great equalizer."

A free and voluntary society cannot afford to make policy decisions on the basis of mass pressures and political coer-

cion. If it does so it cannot long remain free. Neither can it afford to stifle free expression. I have no desire to prevent others from expressing their considered opinions and judgements, nor to hide my own. The advantages of a possible development of a small, "clean", tactical hydrogen weapon after continued testing seems to me to more than offset the possible disadvantages from increased biological hazards. Even if the experts can demonstrate to their own satisfaction that detection of all kinds of nuclear tests is both technically possible and economically feasible (both debatable points at present), they can never demonstrate that detection will be possible *in the future*. To agree to a cessation of weapons tests, even with inspection systems, will be a very risky step for a free society to take. I dislike force and coercion of all kinds, but I am no pacifist. I greatly prefer the chance of continuing to exist as a free individual to the certainty of continuing to exist as a slave.

¹*Report to the Public*, p. 2

²*New York Times*, June 2, 1957

Robert Taft

Old Roundhead, stalwart legislative oak,
 Standing this latter day, still firm and true
 To curb the crown, the king our fathers
 broke —

To spur our vigilance, our watch renew!
 Restless and bold, executory pride
 Chafed now as then to shake off rein and
 bit.

Steady the Commons men must fend and
 bide,

Not sapping power, but disciplining it.
 So stood you plain, without heroic charm:
 Like Pym before you, virtue was your arm.
 In you, like Pym, the sober patriot saw
 Virtue upgirding Freedom under Law.

C. P. IVES

Protest, Respectability, and Belief

SIDNEY TILLIM

THERE ARE TWO SCHOOLS of thought on the subject of whether a patient seriously ill should be informed of the gravity of his condition. One school insists the truth should be told so that treatment can proceed uninhibited by illusion. The realistic approach, it argues, provides the only basis for a true positive attitude towards the illness. Those who feel this approach is inadvisable argue on the grounds that the information may depress the patient to the point where he is incapable of helping himself.

And a third school might be said to exist. It is comprised of those who would shock the patient into awareness by dramatizing the urgency of the situation, by deliberately manipulating the emotional element in a way that binds both positive and negative elements in an atmosphere that is neither one of panic nor equilibrium. As the dramatic approach it implies the dramatic cure and necessarily at the expense of the situation. The inevitable distortion is presumably for the sake of the therapy, but its combination of empiricism and romance leads one to wonder at certain obscurities of motivation.

Such obscurities of motivation would seem to underlie the obviously good inten-

tions of an organization calling itself The National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, when it declared in a full page advertisement in the *New York Times* on Friday, November 15, 1957, that "We Are Facing A Danger Unlike Any Danger That Has Ever Existed. . . ." At once a pose is struck—that of reality—and simultaneously the real situation evaporates in an attitude of great expectations

We are facing a danger unlike any danger that has ever existed. In our possession and in the possession of the Russians are more than enough nuclear explosives to put an end to the life of man on earth.

Our uneasiness is the result of the fact that our approach to the danger is unequal to the danger. . . .

Just in front of us opens a grand human adventure into outer space. But within us and all around us is the need to make this world whole before we set out for other ones. We can earn the right to explore other planets only as we make this one safe and fit for human habitation. . . .

Ideals are often nothing more than the presumption of rights without responsibili-

ties. And there is no better way of disguising this fact than by assuming an air of great responsibility. But the first real crisis would reveal a fundamental lack of commitment. With the committee no such lack is apparent. Rather, the forty-eight signers of the advertisement have made the most modern—and to many, the only one possible—of commitments. They have condescended to believe that ideals are the end of progress rather than the means and thus, in the present, would find it difficult to acknowledge that they are talking about anything but hard facts.

"We are facing a danger unlike any danger that has ever existed. . . ." What saves the remark from absurdity—and in this case, absurdity would be the result of countless repetition throughout history—is the context of immediacy. Today, all human meanings are truly hanging in the balance. The abstract sense of atomization that human consciousness has experienced through scientific discovery has seen its futility concretized in weapons of unlimited destructive power. Meanwhile, the staggering implications of an ideology of space are finally understood by twentieth-century copywriters as "a grand human adventure into outer space."

Humanity [wrote Freud] has in the course of time had to endure from the hands of science two great outrages upon its naive self-love. The first was when it realized that our earth was not the center of the universe, but only a tiny speck in a world system of a magnitude hardly conceivable. . . . The second was when biological research robbed man of his peculiar privilege of having been specially created, and relegated him to a descent from the animal world, implying an ineradicable animal nature in him. . . . But man's craving for grandiosity is now suffering the third and most bitter blow from present day psychological research, which is endeavoring to prove to the "ego" in each one of us that he is not

even master in his own house, but that he must remain content with the veriest scraps of information about what is going on in his own mind. [*Introduction to Psychoanalysis*]

If the latest developments, scientifically, are no more than an extension of the outrages described by Freud—why, then the demand for a sane nuclear policy, while attempting to demonstrate something decidedly more positive than Freud's psychological determinism, is similar to the opposition that from the time of Copernicus has greeted those discoveries which ultimately required new appraisals of man's place in the universe. At the same time it utilizes the scientific "metaphysic" to prove its claims for the human community, although its concept of man is a contradiction of that metaphysic which impresses upon man a sense of insignificance in a boundless universe. In fact, the committee's natural philosophy operates in moral restraint of scientific actualities by proclaiming:

The sovereignty of the human community comes before all others—before the sovereignty of groups, tribes or nations. In that community man has natural rights. He has the right to live and grow, to breathe unpoisoned air, to work on uncontaminated soil. *He has the right to his sacred nature.* [*Italics the author's.*]

In other words, it is a theory which insists that humanism is not a block to spiritual content, that though he is space- and time-bound, man is still the center of the universe. But the argument provides no moral precedent that a sane nuclear policy could expedite in the course of its own development, which might even be a "natural" development also.

Yet it would seem that the social universe is the only immediate entity upon which man can depend for that degree of certitude by which he scales his values in life. Its empiricism is at least partly a

natural analogue of a greater power and motivating force in life. But the belief that man has a sacred nature seems contradictory in the context of the full implications of the committee's protest. A sacred nature implies a universe of sacredness if that is the universe which sacred man inhabits. Therefore, everything that sacred man touches must turn, if he touches it constructively, to some form or manifestation of sacredness. This, indeed, the committee implies when it says "that the greatest era of human history on earth is within reach of all mankind. . . ."

But since it also implies something ultimately more than mortal, it makes one wonder if, since sacredness is a reduction of the concept of divinity, the committee is suggesting that man is divine. Apparently it is not, for its bias is essentially utilitarian and its emphasis is on what man can *do* rather than on what man *is*. In other words, man is sacred on the basis of his presumed capacity to perfect himself. This is, and has been for some time, a highly debatable issue, but my intent here is only to expose the contradiction and suggest its relation to a correlative problem: whether modern man has really accepted—for all his secular sacredness—the idea that he is not at the center of the universe.

According to one writer,¹ "From the free association of modern painters and sculptors under analysis it is quite evident that in their unconscious they still regard themselves at the center of the universe" The suspicion is that the view is widely held if only unconsciously. Despite the fact that the universe suggested by the advertisement is strictly a mortal one, the protest is consistent with a rather medieval view of man's place in the universe. And the previously cited contradiction suggests, further, that the protest is in actuality a metaphysical one in that it "disputes the ends of man and of creation." (Camus in *The Rebel*.)

There is nothing in the committee's argument that acknowledges the necessity which

initiates the choices of individuals and which subsequently intensifies the spiritual and cultural life of the community. This is not always a positive value, but it represents a human nature consistent with its means and ends whereas the belief that man has a sacred nature by virtue of a connection between his morals and technology operating as a dogma confuses, and profoundly so, innocence with value, as if there were no imposition of consciousness and awareness upon the instinctual aspect of man. It is one way democracy exposes a totalitarian inclination, for an ethic of conformity is required by a religion of progress. "Concern for the human community as a whole" (as a *totality*, then) is merely a way of verbalizing the propriety of that communal convention rather than expressing the ideological basis of the human interrelatedness that is proposed.

A concrete example of this interrelatedness is represented by the practical demonstration of community in the form of forty-eight signatures representing individuals of varying cultural and professional pursuits (clergymen included!) affixed to the protest. A broad, one might say oceanic, humanism has united, figuratively at least, doctor, lawyer, merchant, and chief, in an effort to stave off disaster. As such, it is a partially-reasoned response to a threat to life and freedom. "The first order of business for the world," it says, "is to bring both [intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear bombs] under control."

But intelligence can be embarrassing when it strives to demonstrate its effectiveness with a display of practicality. It is no less effective thereby, but it merely points up the fact that it has been misled by its own intentions. What is important here is the symbolic weight of the protest and not the actual end that is sought. For author James Jones, one of the signers, to insist that nuclear test explosions be suspended on the grounds given is as pointless as it is well-intended. In an advertising-conscious society it is just one more testimo-

nial. The subject would have been vastly more illumined if individual reputations were left to support a simple statement of protest rather than to underwrite what is a rather pompous religious argument. On the protest level it remains entirely commendable, but the religious element introduces what is the paradoxical note of respectability. And this is perhaps the most sanguine element to the protest. It is as important as the bombs and the missiles.

It is respectable in the sense that today such protests imply status as much as they seek reform. The virtue of having a scientist, an author, a minister, a rabbi, and a psychologist, among others, agree publicly that a threat to the common good be outlawed is this: a specific cultural group (or level) is presenting a unified aspect to society; and presuming, at the same time, to speak for all mankind. Thus it embodies a paradox described by Mr. Seymour Martin Lipset in a discussion of the intellectual in America today.² In stressing an equalitarian principle, the human community, these signers indirectly present themselves as an elite, pooling their intellectual positions and reputations. As Dr. Lipset writes, "The American intellectual today has worked himself into the unhappy position of knowing that he should like to defend his society, but feeling that in so doing he is betraying his obligation as an intellectual to attack and criticize."

This wish has been obscured by the apparent respectability of the protest, a respectability that proposes democratic solutions which, in fact, would produce class distinctions. As Lipset continues, "What the American intellectual who envies his European brother fails to see is that he is really objecting to the equalitarianism of the United States. In this country a worker will argue the judgement of engineers, and a worker's son will tell off his teacher at a university. American employers and engineers find this code of manners natural, but intellectuals object to it."

The instinctive adjustment to the resulting moral ambiguity has been this: rationalizing their predicament, some intellectuals state the issues in so sentimental a rhetoric that the precise implications are blurred by the very nature of the belief which their language would have us presuppose. Many intellectuals have adjusted to this dilemma by withdrawing from political activity. Probably in the protest for a sane nuclear policy there lies concealed an attempt to maintain traditional liberal status in the form of active protest, while the liberal's need to defend his society is enlarged to include the world community, which is endurable because this community is abstract and lacks pragmatic consequence—that is, the communal sequence other than the biological which concludes in a tradition—the principle so revered by the conservatives.

The protest itself is not wrong or evil. We can do without intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear bombs. But as great a danger (though not immediately as quantitative) lies in the presumption which treats mankind as the mission of men. This approach to contingency and uncertainty not only treats innocence as value, but implies the determinism the argument would deny by treating this value as if it must necessarily end in certainty. On the basis of this certainty, a set of assumptions about the future results, and from them we realize that the subject we have been treating is but a highbrow form of evangelism.

The irony here is that such intellectual groups go to some pain to avoid sermonizing. Yet from the communal pulpit we are charged to "pledge ourselves to the cause of peace with justice on earth. . . ." As Americans, we must declare "that there is no sacrifice we are not prepared to make, nothing we will not do to create such a peace for all peoples. . . ." Furthermore, America like the true church of the free world, must say to the rest of the world:

That none of the differences separating the governments are as important as the membership of all peoples in the human family;

That the big challenge of the age is to develop the concept of a higher loyalty—loyalty by man to the human community;

That the greatest era of human history on earth is within reach of all mankind, that there is no area that cannot be made fertile or habitable, no disease that cannot be conquered;

That all that is required for this is to re-direct our energies, re-discover our moral strength, re-define our purposes.

The committee's attitude is one of a "faith", but the arguments themselves reflect none of the discipline implied by the

very developments (though they are future ones) they are espousing. One need not quarrel with the faith, which is intended to spiritualize freedom in terms of man himself. It is one of the positive aspects of a basically romantic attitude. But it is another story with the arguments. They are a logical consequence of considering mankind as its own mission, secularizing the idea of man's mission or purpose on earth. For the members of this committee, identity on this earth is derived from a mixture of psychotherapy with social reform.

¹Jacques Schnier, in a letter to the author. A professor of art (sculptural design) at the University of California, he is also a lay analyst who is conducting research in psychoanalysis as applied to art.

²"The Egghead Looks at Himself," *New York Times Magazine*, Nov. 17, 1957.

THE CONDITION OF HUNGARY

The present ordeal of Hungary, and that country's historic role, described by two Hungarian exiles.

Andrew the Domestic

STEPHEN CSEREPI

WHEN I THINK OF THE earthquake early that January morning, I remember my mess-tin tipping over and spilling my coffee—already sweetened with precious sugar my wife had sent me in the Christmas package—and also remember getting a new cell-mate on the same day. Yes, I made the acquaintance of Andrew Kotsis then. When we were led back to our cell from the ten-minute walk in the drab prison yard, we noticed him unpacking his belongings on the spare straw mattress. He stepped forward and, telling his name politely, shook hands with both of us. But before Les or I could ask who he was, how many “stones” sentence he had, or what his “crime” had been—the usual inquiries among prison mates—our door opened suddenly and, while we stood in attention facing the wall, our warden called Andrew away. For he was our new “domestic”, the prison lingo for the chore-boy.

This happened in the State Central Prison, where, at that time, the latest execution was the main topic of talk among political prisoners. To signal or even to whisper to prisoners other than those of your own cell

was a risky business. Yet the news somehow spread to everyone: the Communists had executed four “politicals” on Christmas Eve. The earthquake and the arrival of the new domestic were real events in our enclosure and we felt an itching to converse, in sign language, about both.

We were not disappointed in Andrew. He proved to be a really sound chap. After lunch he used to open the hatch stealthily and shove in a slice of bread, a tinful of unsweetened coffee, or soggy noodles—a really kind action in that situation. But he could not do anything about the badness of the food, or the shortage of vitamins.

Cell-mates varied frequently. The Communist-dictated way of living does not allow for contentment or fraternization: fellow-workers or fellow-prisoners are permitted to share surroundings for a couple of weeks, often for a few hours only. Our new cell-mate brought a change into the monotonous life of us two, although he was away on duty for most of the day. He swept the snow, cleaned the corridors, tidied and heated the guards' room, emptied about fifty latrine buckets, and dished and served

the meals to his fellow-prisoners with great zeal. Every night we waited for him to come along just before lights out and tell us the news of the day. At that time these trivialities were of immense importance to us. I remember him telling us that the term of one of the prisoners had been up but "they"—that is, the Communists—"forgot" to set him free. Upon this he refused to take his meals. That mate of ours was not obliged to starve for long, though. Two days later he failed to turn up at the daily walk, which meant that he had been released after all.

Andrew often recounted the quarrels and jealousies between our guards. So Les and I usually knew the story that lay behind a transfer of a guard. In most cases we did not gain anything, however, because we got a still cruder rascal in place of the transferred one. New brooms sweep clean.

I soon noticed a certain amount of reserve and elaborate politeness in Andrew's manners, although he was not a Communist and therefore he had no need to fear us. His education had not gone past the elementary school. To me, twenty years his senior, a "political" and an educated man, he always talked with clumsy reverence. He never used slang, he did his best to pick his words, and did not resort to bad language in my presence. Furthermore, he never called me by my first name, which made me rather uneasy when I talked with him. In my opinion he was a simple working man, worthy of a different, a better life. Andrew never mentioned his father; I suspect that he did not know him in person. His love and gratitude went to his mother, of whom he often spoke during the long Sunday afternoon conversations of his off-duty time. She was, I learned, a flower-woman in an ill-famed district of Budapest, the homeland proper of Andrew. He hinted bitterly that his wife had gone "to live with a bloke",—a common enough incident in the life of a male prisoner—especially if he has got a heavy sentence. And our Andrew had enjoyed the Communist system inside penal institutions for eleven years.

Of himself he spoke modestly and sparsely, probably because of his uneasiness concerning the reason for his imprisonment. We politicals were a different class, and Andrew realized too well that he actually was not one of us. Strictly speaking, he was not even a law-breaker. His downfall was caused by his lack of judgement. In his youth Andrew had been rather wild. He had learned to be a mason, but made little use of that craft, which, in turn, was not his fault. World War Two broke out, and he spent several years fighting on the Russian front. During his first furlough, he told us, he came home, got married, and returned to the battlefield again. The Putsch of the Arrowcross Party—towards the end of 1944 and the War—caught him in Budapest. And Andrew, in the anarchy that followed, "expropriated" a small grocery shop that had been "confiscated from a Jewish person" shortly before. Yearning for peace and tired of fighting for five years in uniform, he was serving his customers quietly in the shop when a squad of Communists seized him. After a few months of "preparation" on the grounds of a "crime against the people"—which in normal times would have been called a common embezzlement—they put him in prison.

Ten long years he passed in various penitentiaries, mines, and concentration camps; and two-thirds of his term already was done when he became our domestic. While he was in the "small prison building" he told us that he had written a petition for his release to the Communist Minister of Justice—or rather the Minister of Communist Justice. (Incidentally, that place, or rather its name, was known by every prisoner who, some time, passed through "the Central", and their number must have run into many tens of thousands. This ill-fated block contained those who had been sentenced to death. In the backyard of this building were set up the gallows when executions were carried out in the early hours of the morning.) In our company Andrew was awaiting the effect of his petition for remission. He had to wait a long time yet, for

his appeal, like so many others, was shelved. Finally he, too, was set free during the heroic fight with the Russian occupation army and the secret police.

I want to emphasize that Andrew made the acquaintance of the Communist prisons when hideous atrocities were committed on prisoners. A few years before my time they were regularly beaten and kicked and kept on hunger-cure. We knew that he was telling the truth because we had heard similar stories from other "old-timers". Unlucky Andrew, on top of it all, could prove his experiences of maltreatment bodily: under his black hair the scars were still visible. Neither could his nice moustache—under an aristocratic Roman nose—hide certain marks on his lips. But he had a still more unusual "eloquent" proof: the absence of teeth, both upper and lower, in his right cheek. (On the left side, not one was missing.) Evidently, his interrogator some years earlier—an ill-humored, quick-tempered Communist sleuth—had been left-handed. This fact lent the peculiar lisp to Andrew's talk which cannot be acquired by birth. And this deficiency of his led to our untimely parting.

Andrew had no interest in politics. His untutored mind could not understand the subtleties of class distinction. He had no idea what Communist ideology was. But he knew well that the Communists were wicked, brutal, habitual liars. He experienced this when he was sentenced first to death, and later—years later—to fifteen years in prison, for a crime which was no more than a petty law-breaking act during the months of a revolution.

I was amazed that the ordeals, the fact that for three or four years the rope was literally "on his neck", had not impaired the natural disposition and vigor of Andrew. I knew that, for years, every night turning in with the thought you might be roused on your bunk at dawn with the words: "The Independent Hungarian Tribunal rejected your appeal!" is far from comforting and had caused many in the death cell to have nervous breakdowns. Not

so Andrew. He was a materialist — at least in his own way. He had plans. Most prisoners have. After his release—which he took for granted—he would divorce his wife. Then he intended to go abroad, settle down, work and live as he pleased. And he would raise a family. In short, his desire was to realize everything he had been unable to do because of his birth, his parentage, his defective education, the wrong company in his youth, the War and the Communist jail. In my eyes he was a guiltless criminal, a convict through no fault of his own, who in his youth had been in trouble with the former social and military regimes—for fighting, for delinquency, for petty offenses.

But as I said, the eleven years in prison left little mark on his humor and energy. Day after day, springily and vigorously, he demonstrated the physical exercises and shouted drill commands—he knew them well from his six years in the army—in a stentorian, sonorous voice. And, after marching back, in the "small prison" he passed to the "mortals" and to us, his cell-mates, with comradely kindness whatever he could lay his hands upon—food, cigarette butts, bootlaces, soap, needles and thread—all so valuable for a prisoner. He practiced his daily good deeds until, as suddenly as he came into our lives, he was displaced. We learned later that he had been caught in the act of putting aside "coffee" for himself. (This miserable liquid, brown in color, was made of unknown substitutes — making it tasteless, odorless, and harmless.) Well, the poor devil was unable to chew properly; and, except pasty food, he always passed his rations to his cell-mates. This habit of his—a good deed itself—was an offense according to the Communist prison rules. So, without warning to him or us, he was relieved of his duties. We did not surmise anything wrong until the guard entered our cell to collect his soap, towel, and other paraphernalia.

All this happened with an abrupt suddenness. We could not even shake hands with Andrew. Later I saw him a couple of times during the walks, and on one occasion he

managed to signal to me that he was well. His offense was not considered to deserve the dark cell, after all. A few days after this, however, he must have been placed into another group of prisoners, because I failed to see him again—although he might have been in the same building.

Also my own status changed in the jail: one afternoon Les "was lifted" from my side and I too moved to other cells and had various other cell-mates. Several months later I had a glimpse of Andrew in another courtyard, marching in the company of prisoners who all were strangers to me. The circumstances were such that I could not signal or call out to him, neither was there anybody around to send word to him. Then he disappeared again. Six months were to pass before the time the rumors which had been whispered among us became true in the outer world and an honest-to-goodness, noble but desperate revolution began. It was during this unforgettable freedom-fight that I heard of Andrew, or rather heard Andrew himself, without seeing him, again. He must have been put into the same building, or in the same wing in which I was kept at that time. This is how it happened.

We had been "under restricted lock" for four or five days then. The reasons of it we could not comprehend. Our underwear was not replaced, we had to go without a bath, a shave—no walk, no exercise, nothing, just the bare walls and the brutes outside. The courtyards were guarded by security policemen with submachine guns who were doing their beats in twos—while from a distance we could hear the continuous rumble of explosions and bangs of firearms of various caliber. We were not allowed to step through the doors of our cells; we were helpless; we could not do anything. Apart from the few occasional angry calls and curses—mostly from the upper-floor cells—for cigarettes and more food (when the guards were just not looking) the silence was terrific: a general strike in the suburbs around the prison

building, and street-fights in the distant city.

On the afternoon we were roused by a volley of machinegun firing coming from close quarters—from that other institution related to ours, the nearby cemetery. We realized that we had friends not far away who were aiming at our guards in the watch-towers. Yes, those were already answering with their submachineguns. In the rattle of a solitary machine-gun and a number of pistols we could hear the encouraging shout from our partisan friends: "Hold out, boys! No fear, friends! It is not going to last long!" —To this came Andrew's reply. I recognized his voice immediately: "Come on, buddies! Give them Hell!" Our spirits rose. We could hardly restrain risking a bullet from our panic-stricken guards when we all learned that our freedom-fighter comrades had not forgotten us. I, for myself, was quite satisfied with Andrew's performance. As ever, he was quick-witted, he summed up the situation in his reply, his stentorian call once again, which was made in the name of us all inside the bars. In that glorious late October some five hundred or six hundred prisoners must have been languishing in that wing in "the Central".

Again several months went by and I began to forget Andrew. I presumed he must have been set free, like myself, with the other two thousand occupants of "the Central". I knew for certain that Andrew—just like other true proletarians—fought against the common enemy within our country. But I did not know whether he survived the city-wide battle. He had liked the fight—I was told this much by a former fellow-prisoner whom I met as a free man in Vienna. We talked just briefly, because the next day he was to leave for Australia.

A fortnight later, on a winter afternoon, I went out for a walk with my family. We had stopped in front of a shop window when I heard a man's voice asking: "Is it you, Uncle Steve?" At this I turned and saw before me my former cell-mate, An-

drew the domestic. He was clad in neat civilian clothes; his face no longer was hollow on the right side; he had a briefcase in hand. I suddenly remembered his saying a year earlier how much he had wanted to have a briefcase and how he had yearned to become a white-collar worker. Well, he had got his briefcase now, and in it he—like so many others—had all that he was able to bring with him into the free world.

According to prison custom, we embraced each other, and he offered his hand to us. I asked him what had become of him since we had spoken to each other, what was he doing in that town. As was his wont, he replied shyly and in his modest manner. Yes, he too was set free on that day memorable not only for us prisoners but for the whole nation. He "had some things to set right," he said meaningly. But a couple

of weeks afterwards, when he learned that "his services were no longer needed" he decided to "step out" from the old country. It was only a few days earlier that he had arrived in Austria—the first Western country he had ever seen; and, before leaving the continent for good, he had a look at the city for himself.

From what I know of Andrew, he could be depended upon to make a thorough job of his and his fellow countrymen's fight for freedom. I am convinced that he paid his debts to the secret security police, to the Communists, and to the prison guards—equally and with interest. He did so rightly and well. He told me before we parted that it had been high time to pay off what he had owed in order to liquidate his past and start a new life in his land of dreams, America.

Hungary's Place in European History

BELA MENCZER

I. The European Concept of a "Central" Power

WE HAVE TO GO FAR back to understand why, throughout a thousand years of its history down to the events of the autumn of 1956, a small nation of strange origin and speaking a tongue which has no affinity with any of the main groups of the European languages, arrogated to itself an historical mission: nothing less than being the guardian of the Christian laws and principles of Europe, the keeper of the gate to Europe, and the center

of a conglomeration of races over whom it claimed the leadership. At some time in their history, many European nations have felt that they were at the centre of the world. When I was a boy, our geography lessons triumphantly demonstrated that we, in Hungary, were "the heart of Europe", and that our capital, my birth-place Budapest, was the heart, the center of the natural unity, which was surrounded by the chain of the Carpathian mountains and watered by the Danube.

This geographical assertion sounds plau-

sible enough. It is consciously, or semi-consciously, hidden behind most of the political concepts of Hungarians, from somewhat naïve forms of patriotism to highly elaborated politico-historical theories. Amongst the smaller nations of Europe, Hungary alone raised the claim to be the center of a system; this is perhaps the main characteristic of its history and the inspiration behind much of its achievement.

Before outlining the part Hungary has played in European history—in order to be able to offer at the end of this study some suggestions concerning a future “Center” or Middle-Zone of Europe, which must recover its independence if there is to be a Europe—let us examine briefly this most important historical concept of a “Center” of world power as the safeguard of Peace, and see how it has been the preoccupation of every age, down to our own days.

Since the earth is round, the position of such a center has always been controversial. A famous inscription on the Sublime Porte in Constantinople states that the earth “is balanced on the tip of a Sword,” so that “the guardian of the Peace is the strong arm which wields the Sword.” On the other hand, the Chinese called their Empire the “Realm of the Middle;” while Aristotle considered that the “Center” was in Greece—i.e. half-way between the warlike but barbaric North and the religious but decadent South.¹

In Europe, the “Center” shifted according to the necessities of the moment. If we span the centuries rapidly, three examples only suffice to make this clear and to prove that a recognized world center has always been considered to be the safeguard of accepted and valid principles of politics, providing the foundations of peace and consecrated law.

The first example is Charlemagne. When the Moslem invasion threatened from Spain and North Africa, Charlemagne made his Empire of the West the “Center” for a new European political organization. His German successors moved the center

of power back to the Mediterranean, then permanently back to Germany, always with the aim of creating a central power, which was to be the guardian of a European system of laws, privileges, local sovereignties and corporate liberties.

The most comprehensive formula for this system provides our second example; the constitution of the Holy Roman Empire, contained in a document called the Golden Bull, granted to the German Princes by the Emperor Charles IV in Prague in 1352. The principles contained in this Golden Bull (definition and consecration of hereditary territorial sovereignties, duties of the Emperors as the elected representatives of the collective will of the Princes) still played a certain part in the age which saw the rise of modern Europe, that is, the age of Luther and the nascent nationalism of the sixteenth century. Peace was thus conceived everywhere as a mutual recognition of a consecrated territorial succession to titles, privileges, etc., defined in laws and treaties. Indeed, this concept of Peace resulting from the co-ordination of institutions existed from the days of the *Pax Romana* to the *Pax Britannica* of the early years of the present century.

The third and last example is the concept of Jean Bodin, the humanist lawyer in the service of the Kings of France, and contemporary of Luther: “*la royauté moyenne*,” or Middle Realm. He meant, of course, France, as opposed to the German or Central Empire, instituted by the Golden Bull of Prague.² This claim to be the central power has never left French political thought, from Bodin’s far-off century, through the *grand siècle*, the Revolution and Napoleon’s Empire, the three German Wars of 1870, 1914 and 1939, as the French call them, to the present tragic crisis in North Africa.

Two factors are thus essential when a nation claims leadership (not necessarily domination!) over other nations in Europe. First, it must be conscious that it occupies a central geographical position at a certain critical period of history. Secondly, that it

possesses, by tradition, such ancient laws and institutions as sum up the principles underlying the European political system. It was not sheer numbers which gave European nations their respective importance in the past, nor was it any "racial" superiority. They became the center of power because, for a time, they justified their claim to symbolize European values.

In our century, we are inclined to think that all nations are equals. President Wilson's generation, which made the Versailles Treaty, took their existence for granted, and thought their populations remained constant in number. They did not understand why nations were not equal, nor why one national community believes that it can claim superiority over another one. They did not realize that linguistic communities are not necessarily nations, nor that some nations can be held together without any community of language. An earlier generation, in the nineteenth century, had considered nations to be superior or inferior according to their cultural achievement in which they are manifestly unequal—; while certain nations were said to be "racially" superior to others. Finally, President Wilson's generation thought that disputes between nations could be settled, and eventually eliminated, by the democratic principle of counting heads, and taking majority votes.

None of the attempts to deal by these means with the problem of Peace between the nations has proved particularly successful in the last decades. The historical evolution of Europe and the laws governing it were ignored. It is greatly to be feared that the United Nations Organization was still conceived in these un-historical terms.

II. Tradition, Reform, and Revolution in Hungarian Thought and Action

Hungary's essential claim in Europe was to be an institution. It was also, in Eastern Europe, the geographical center of a system—the Habsburg Monarchy—from 1527 to 1918.

Hungarian independence was conse-

crated when Pope Sylvester II sent the Holy Crown to St. Stephen in 1001. The King of the country was subject to the Pope in religious matters, but not to the Emperor in secular government. After the extinction of the national dynasty at the beginning of the fourteenth century, all foreign Princes who succeeded in Hungary through the female line of St. Stephen's dynasty (called Arpádians, after the Prince Arpád, who conquered Hungary in 896) had to give an undertaking that they would govern the country according to its own laws, and independently of the laws or interests of any other foreign Kingdoms which they might possess in addition to Hungary.

But to this original juridical element of the national conscience, a new factor was soon added. Hungary became the geographic center of an East-European triangular system which at one time—during the reign of Louis of Anjou, 1341-1382, touched upon three seas, the Baltic, the Adriatic and the Black Sea. This system has been rediscovered in our own day and called the *Intermarium*; Polish political thinkers of the inter-war years and especially of the time of the second World War devoted a good deal of activity to reviving this concept in a modernized form, and supported it by economic arguments.

In the fifteenth century, the increasing threat from the Turks made Hungary the "fortress of Christendom," and it is this function in particular which shows us Hungary's place in European history. For all that, the country never belonged to the Holy Roman Empire, although the two functions of King of Hungary and Roman Emperor were first united in the person of Sigismund, in the years 1387 to 1437. Under this Sigismund (the grandson of Charles IV, the Golden Bull's author and descendant of Henry of Luxemburg, to whom Dante dedicated his *De Monarchia*) the idea of a united Europe, presided over by an Emperor recognized by all the other Kings and Princes as the first amongst them, almost came nearer to realization

than at any subsequent time; the shield of this "Central Power" in Europe was the Kingdom of Hungary. This situation, however, did not last more than half a century. The conception was ruined by conflicts between Kings and nobles over claims to privileges, into which we cannot enter here.

The positive and legalistic concepts of sovereignty and privilege had, however, their lighter, more poetic side. To give weight to their juridical texts, the humanist lawyers of the fifteenth century invented fantastic genealogies: kings, princes and famous war-leaders, for example, were made to trace their descent from illustrious Romans, while the whole Hungarian nation claimed descent from the most brilliant barbarian conqueror, Attila the Hun.

Mathias Corvinus, the son of that John of Hunyad who defended Belgrade against the Turks, was perhaps the most attractive of these Renaissance *condottieri*. The nobility elected him to the throne of Hungary in 1458, but he died without founding a dynasty in 1490. He was a man of manifold talents, a brilliant linguist, a connoisseur of art treasures and rare books. He organized a military system whereby the supreme command was given to captains learned in the art of war, instead of to the hereditary feudal lords. He personified the new Renaissance ideal of the prince who was a master-mind in the sciences of war and of politics, a man endowed with all the virtues that came from his semi-mythical origin. Such a poetic conception, however, did not entirely conquer European political thought, which remained juridical.

When Hungary accepted the Union with the Kingdom of Bohemia and the hereditary provinces of Austria in 1527, under Ferdinand of Habsburg, the first of his dynasty, the situation thus created was not entirely new. Hungary had always been part of a composite system, as we have seen, a political institution in a hierarchy of co-ordinated institutions. It had in the two previous centuries been for some time

united to Poland under Louis of Anjou, and to Bohemia and the Empire under Sigismund. When its dynasty was purely national, as under the Arpád Kings and later under Mathias Corvinus, its Kings had ruled over countries associated to Hungary—over Croatia, Wallachia, Moldavia, sometimes even over Bulgaria.

The Union of 1527 did not mean union with the Empire, which only came thirty years later. When the Emperor Charles V abdicated in 1556, his brother Ferdinand was King of Bohemia and Hungary, but only archduke in Austria, not Emperor. The abdication was naturally not foreseen in 1527, neither was it known that Charles V's son Philip II would succeed to his dominions in Spain, but not in the Empire. Thus the resistance that Hungary made against the encroachments of the Empire, in the name of its "historic rights," came much later in date than the Union itself.

In Hungary, the juridical phase of Europe's political thought in the sixteenth century was expressed in Stephen Werböczy's famous collection of Hungarian laws. To an even greater extent than the Imperial Golden Bull of Prague, the liberties and privileges codified by Werböczy, Lord Judge of the Realm at the time of the Turkish invasion of 1526, was the textbook of the governing class and formed the framework of the national conscience. Hungary's territory was divided between the Habsburg Kings, the semi-independent Princes of Transylvania and the Turk from 1538 to 1687. Her national unity was also weakened by the division between Catholics and Protestants, as was that of most other European countries at the time; but its spiritual unity was safeguarded by the unity of its legal practices. If Hungary's form of government was aristocratic (a word which had no pejorative sense before the eighteenth century) and remained moderately aristocratic until our own democratic century and the end of the Second World War, the explanation lies in the prestige which jurisprudence and positive law once possessed all over Europe.

Professor Toynbee considers that the keyword to the history of civilizations lies in a "challenge" and a "response". But surely in European history, the keyword is rather "claims" to leadership, based on the conception of historic law, and "counter-claims," as we see them fought out in this period in the struggles between crowns and parliaments, kings and nobles, emperors and sovereign princes. The short period of Prince Francis Rákóczi's struggle for the privileges of Hungary against the King-Emperor (1703-1710) is a case in point and was moreover highly significant for Hungary's place in European history. For the claim of this Prince to the throne of Transylvania, and to the leadership of a "Hungarian Confederation" against the Emperor, became the occasion of the first rapprochement between France and Russia concerning an alliance against the "central" power of the Continent, the Empire.³ British diplomacy contributed to the pacification of Hungary (which was of the greatest importance to the first great coalition at the time of the War of the Spanish Succession) while France supported Rákóczi. Peter the Great was quick to see that this Hungarian rising in favor of the privileges (i.e. the "liberties") of the nobles provided Russia with the first opportunity to intervene in the "Center" of Europe, as the power able to restore the balance between the forces in the first truly general war of the Continent. Thus the struggle was concluded, and advised by his British and Dutch allies, the Emperor in 1711 confirmed Hungary's independence and liberties, (synonymous always with privileges) and a new "liberty," religious tolerance for the Hungarian Protestants. The Transylvanian statesman Michael Cserei made a theoretical defense of this pacification in his *Compendium Theologicum et Politicum*, in which it is interesting to meet the Aristotelian concept of the "heroic" monarchy—i.e., that the monarch has an hereditary right to his position, but he must justify it by his

virtues, and must be a link between the different nations united under his Crown—as well as a touch of Leibniz's concept of "harmony in diversity."

The aristocratic foundations of Hungarian political thought evolved in a new direction in the course of the eighteenth century. In this it followed the general European pattern. Jurisprudence was now replaced by a "natural" philosophy which compared politics to physics, submitting them both to the same laws. So a new kind of humanism gradually prevailed. Montesquieu, for example, was no longer interested in the validity of statutes, but in the viability of national institutions, in the *Esprit*, that is, *des Lois*.

As far as Hungary was concerned, the new trend found an echo during the reigns of Maria-Theresa and Joseph II, the grand days of Danubian civilization. Joseph II in particular considered that codes of law and institutions were a barbaric survival of another age, and mere obstacles to human progress. Many of his Hungarian contemporaries agreed with him, but the radical and hasty way in which he abolished the provincial Diets, the exemption from taxation, the corporations of the nobility and the onerous complexities of Hungarian legal practice, excited the opposition of the nobles.

New winds were blowing over Europe, which were to make themselves strongly felt in Hungary. The new theories spoke of the balance of power, which was to be established *more geometrico* (Spinoza); of Harmony, through an agreement on essentials by the powers (Leibniz). The emphasis shifted from national rights to the national character, which is said to be the result of climate and geographical conditions (Montesquieu). As yet undeveloped nationalities were discovered, who were said to live in their language, their songs and their legends, but which do not have any expression in political treaties, laws and institutions (Herder).

It was into this new European mood

that the Hungarian national conscience became involved, in a new form and style, on the eve of the French Revolution. The early phase of the new Hungarian national movement was literary, artistic and humanitarian; it cared little for institutions, it broke with the juridico-political theories; it was not primarily concerned with legislative reforms. The French Revolution led it into a political direction, no doubt, but it may also be said to have delayed its results. First, because Austria reacted strongly to the Revolution, then because for twenty-three years the struggle went on for the very survival of the Danubian Monarchy, of which Hungary was a substantial part.⁴

Concerning the role played by the Habsburg Monarchy in the Napoleonic Wars, it is sufficient here to recall for a moment that the participation of Austria in the European events of 1792-1815 was both significant for the contemporaries and full of consequences for the future. Some of these consequences have lasted to our own day. The first was that Austria relinquished the title of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806. This title had been meaningless for a long time, but the inevitable result of relinquishing it meant that the idea of a common nationality remained as the only possible basis for a political reorganization of Germany, and with this, the idea of nationality took a hitherto unsuspected, or rather an already forgotten, importance all over Europe.

Once more, but certainly not for the last time in Europe, we see the Aristotelian argument on the "Center" used to justify the assumption of a historical mission; it appears in the work of the ablest literary defender of the cause of Austria, Friedrich von Gentz. In his "The Equilibrium of Europe", which the British Government of the time caused to be reprinted on several occasions in England and other countries, considering that it was the best manifesto Europe could offer in its resistance to Napoleon, Gentz wrote, addressing his fel-

low-countrymen, the Germans:

Never forget that the center of every endeavour to redeem Europe from its servitude is your part of the world. There alone can the law-book of arbitrary power be torn up and there alone can the proud structure of overwhelming power be broken, there the new and immortal alliance between Liberty, Order and Peace must be built for the coming generation. Neither England nor Russia can perform this mission. They are most desirable allies and auxiliaries. Yet the basic work of liberation must be accomplished on German soil and not elsewhere. From there the restoration must begin, because there the evil was accomplished. Through Germany, Europe has fallen, through Germany it must rise again.⁵

The idea of the Danubian Monarchy as a Center in Europe was the foundation of the whole of Metternich's diplomacy. The Habsburg Monarchy was simultaneously the ally of Russia and of Britain; of Russia against a potential new revolution in France, or elsewhere in Western Europe; of Britain (and potentially of France) against the Russian tendency to expand in the Balkans. Throughout the four decades of Metternich's government, the two policies were applied alternatively. When events of a revolutionary character occurred, the Chancellor acted to strengthen the union between governments, and mainly between the German Princes, amongst whom the Emperor of Austria, despite his having relinquished the formal Roman Imperial title, remained a *primus inter pares*. But whenever Russia showed an intention to push forward towards the Bosphorus, as in the years of the Greek rising in 1821-28, Metternich was inclined to side with the West. In the case of the July Revolution in France in 1830, he was only too ready to accept Louis Philippe, rather than to implicate Austria into an anti-revolutionary crusade headed by the Tsar, knowing only too well that any fur-

ther increase in Russian power could only be to the detriment of a "Center" in Europe, the function of which was to prevent conflicts—or else to decide them, as Austria succeeded in deciding the coalition war of 1813 against Napoleon by its well-timed intervention.⁶

Although to a large extent the Hungarian reform movement of the early nineteenth century was an opposition movement against Metternich and while also the March 1848 upheaval which brought about Metternich's fall actually originated with the Hungarian opposition, this remarkable period of Hungarian history, which saw the arts and the letters of the country at their peak, and laid the foundation of its modern economic progress, must be understood in the context of his era and his European vision. The national reform movement began in the days of Maria Theresa, when the first phase as we have seen, was cultural and literary. It took an interest in the traditional institutions when they were attacked by Joseph II, and not until then. But the extreme aristocratic tendencies of Francis Rákóczi's days were finished, so the reform movement tried to combine humanitarian, moral and intellectual reform with the traditional institutions. This process was stopped, or at least delayed for a long time, by the psychological reaction to the French Revolution within Austria. The most progressive of European Monarchies, the country of Joseph II, suddenly turned away from all the ideas of the age, partly no doubt because Marie-Antoinette's tragedy affected her native country more than any other in Europe, but perhaps even more because the Austro-French alliance, concluded in 1756, was dissolved by the French Revolution, so that Austria lost more by the changes in France than any other European power.⁷ As soon as the new German Confederation was founded in 1815, the two European Powers within it, Austria and Prussia, became rivals, although for some time the seniority of Austria was not questioned.

We see the importance of Hungary again

in this situation, for it was his capacity as King of Hungary (the non-German part of the Emperor's sovereignty) which allowed him to practice a European policy, instead of a one-sided German one. In other words, the composite character of the Habsburg power was a safeguard against the growth of German nationalism. For some time this German nationalism was encouraged by Russia, in order to weaken Austrian influence within the German-speaking area, but in due course the tables were turned and the German semi-mystical political ideas took root in Russia in a form that the Tsars could not but dislike (going so far that the German secret societies strove to get the Russian government entirely in their power).

When the Russian Consul-General Kotzebue was murdered in 1819 by a fanatic of the new German nationalism, Gentz's report to Metternich explained the event by suggesting that the victim was one of the influences over the mind of the Tsar Alexander which had alienated him from the German party of the *Tugendbund*. In 1825, the Russian conspirators known as the "Decembrists," disciples of the German *Tugendbund*, and partisans of revolutionary democratic principles, set out a programme in which Hungary was to be placed under Russian rule, so that the "Slav brotherhood" could extend to the coast of Dalmatia.⁸ It is obvious that in these circumstances, economic and cultural reforms were cards in Metternich's hands to keep Austria as a supra-national Central European power, the "Center", neither carried away by the dreams of Pan-Germanism, nor reduced to the simple role of a satellite of Russia.

In the long run, Metternich could not control the Hungarian reform movement, and was unable to free it of Radical concepts, of elements that sympathized with the ideas of Louis Kossuth (1802-1894) concerning popular sovereignty. There was a conservative wing to this reform movement, led by Count Aurel (1808-42) and Count Emil Dessewffy (1810-1866), but

they were in a minority; there was also a Liberal center, led by Count Stephen Széchenyi (1791-1860) but the latter's position declined throughout the 1840's, when Kossuth's star rose, and his fiery popular oratory conquered the younger intellectual elements of his country.

Without re-telling here the events of 1848/9 in Hungary, which throughout the years of the exiled Kossuth's tours in the United States and Britain in the 1850's received such tremendous publicity, we may recall that Kossuth's short-lived demo-

cratic dictatorship in 1849 was followed by an Imperial force dispatched to Hungary, and that the autonomy of the country was suspended under a military state of siege. Metternich warned the Imperial government, in a private memorandum written in London in July 1848, that the sovereignty of the King of Hungary must be kept separate and intact, and the pretensions of the Frankfurt Assembly must be rejected, for the sake of Hungary and other non-German sovereignties united in the Habsburg Monarchy.⁹ The military

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Diet has slimmed her to a nice perfection;
Envied by callow girls, flouting old age,
And like St. Agnes martyred in a cage,
She primps for lions and the crowd's affec-
tion.
Forbidden labor in the couch of birth
And safe from any traffic with the ground,
She rides triumphant on the wheel-go-
round,
The hag of fashion for your dollar's worth.

LAWRENCE P. SPINGARN

operation against Kossuth was already in full swing, when Metternich repeated even more emphatically the same advice to his successor, the Imperial Prime Minister General Felix Schwarzenberg, in January 1849. He also expressed his indignation over the drastic and cruel measures taken by the military command in Hungary.¹⁰

It is a gross exaggeration to describe the years between the defeat of Kossuth in 1849 and the restoration of the Hungarian constitution at the Compromise of 1867 as the "era of absolutism," although it was known under this name for many years in Hungarian schoolbooks, while most foreign historians dealing with Austria-Hungary still designate it in those terms. There was, for some months, a military state of siege in Hungary, with courts-martial and executions in 1849; there were subsequently various provisional administrations, which were stages towards the restoration of constitutional order, while the degree of self-government to be granted to Hungary remained under discussion. With the exception of rabid bureaucratic reformers, who came to power on the wave of March 1848, and whose aim was a unified Austria, economically and socially more advanced than Hungary used to be under its aristocratic autonomy and "historic rights," nobody thought of amalgamating Hungary with Austria, let alone of Germanizing it.

It is a fact, though it is usually little considered by historians, that the conservative school of thought amongst Austrian statesmen and military leaders was in favor of the restoration of Hungary's ancient autonomy and institutions, while the progressive and democratic reformers, such as the Minister Baron Alexander Bach, advocated a more closely unified Austria. Metternich played no further part in active politics after his resignation in March 1848, but the Hungarian conservative leaders Count Emil Dessewffy, László Szögyény-Marich and Count Anton Szécsen, considered him to be their leader; amongst the Imperial statesmen the most

favorable to the Hungarian point of view was Baron Hübner, for some time Austrian Ambassador in Paris, and one of Metternich's closest collaborators. Even during the period of reprisals, the conservative military nobility, Field-Marshal Prince Alfred Windischgraetz and General Prince Friedrich Schwarzenberg, the son of the victor of Leipzig, showed sympathy for the liberties contained in the ancient institutions of the Kingdom of Hungary. Even before Metternich's fall, the dramatist and poet Grillparzer, a life-long disciple of the Liberal Great-German thought, had reproached the Chancellor for his partiality to Hungary's "antiquated" liberties and constitution.¹¹

The keynote to the two decades in Austro-Hungarian history following the upheaval of 1848 was determined by three factors. First, the Habsburg Monarchy detached itself from the Russian alliance at the time of the Crimean War; the alliance had been conceived as a defense against revolutions, and had never been intended as an alignment of Austria with one group of European powers—those of the East—against another group—those of the West. Second, Austria tried to create a Central power, equal in strength to the Western alliance and to Russia alike. In the plan conceived by Prince Felix Schwarzenberg in 1850, this Central power would not have had a one-sided national character, since he intended a union of Germans and non-Germans, the latter being in a slight majority.¹² Third, the Austrians wished to avoid a one-sided German policy, which had, however, influential advocates inside the Austrian government, supporters of the liberal-democratic version of Greater Germany, such as Baron Alexander Bach and other men whom the Revolution of 1848 had brought to power. After the elimination of the Italian question in 1859, Napoleon III saw that Austria could be an ally, and hoped that if he could form an alliance with Austria, he could prevent the grouping together of all the minor German states under Prussia, and under the banner of an

aggressive German nationalism.

To few contemporaries was the issue as clear as it is to us, with the passage of time. Austria and Prussia were not only two states, or geographical entities; they represented two schools of thought, two principles in European politics. The problem of the nineteenth century was the creation of a "Center" in Europe, to be an equilibrium between the forces of the West and of Russia. In the case of the Habsburg Monarchy, this Center could have been multi-national or supra-national, the main influence in it belonging to nations of old historical formation, but too small in number to conceive any aggressive plans, or to threaten any state. In the case of Prussia, on the contrary, the hegemony of the Center came to one nation alone, so that with the defeat of Austria by Prussia in 1866, it was only a question of time before the nations of Europe formed new alliances and coalitions to challenge the right of "Germanism" to the Center—not the right of the German nation necessarily, but a doctrine of German superiority, which in time became the theoretical foundation of the Prussian power.

The true significance of the restoration of the Hungarian constitution by the Emperor Francis-Joseph in 1867 was that Austria made an attempt to become a Central power, instead of a German one. The chief influence which led to this reorganization of the Habsburg state was that of Bismarck's most remarkable opponent, von Beust, Saxon Prime Minister, and later Imperial Chancellor in Vienna. The historical context of the Act of Restitution (commonly called the "Compromise") was the preparation of an Austro-French alliance by Beust and Thouvenel, Napoleon III's Foreign Minister. The war of 1870-71, with its too rapid and somewhat unexpected result, made any further orientation of the Central power towards France an impossibility. In addition, Britain under Gladstone chose to isolate itself for a long time from continental alliances. Thus it came about that Austria was slowly forced

to follow the Prussian lead. The orientation towards Prussia was not the result of the Hungarian Restitution Act of 1867, as some British historians of the Danubian region, such as R. W. Seton-Watson, have claimed it to be; it happened despite the Act, which incidentally gave the Monarchy its official name Austria-Hungary, for the first time in international relations.¹³

In his Memoirs, Beust refuted in advance a later legend, which some historians have unfortunately repeated, whereby Hungarian nationalism was made responsible for the decision of Francis-Joseph to omit a coronation in Prague, as King of Bohemia, and not to restore Bohemia's historic rights as fully as he had restored the constitution to Hungary. The "anti-Slav" feelings of Hungary had nothing to do with this issue. Beust accepted complete responsibility for the decision. In his attempt to establish a Liberal regime in Austria, the first step was the abolition of the 1855 Concordat, which bound the Monarchy too closely to Rome. He therefore needed the Liberal Germans of Bohemia in the Vienna *Reichsrat*, in which the clerical German element of Tyrol and Salzburg would otherwise have been overwhelming; thus he wanted to keep the deputies from Bohemia in Vienna, instead of sending them to Prague. In 1860, Count Emil Dessewffy and his friends, the Hungarian Conservatives, actually urged the full restoration of the historic status of Bohemia, in the various memoranda which they addressed to Francis-Joseph; they visualized this restoration within the framework of a reorganized Monarchy, based on traditional constitutions and historic rights.¹⁴

Hungarian history in modern times shows various tendencies; and in the Liberal era, which extended from the Restitution Act of 1867 to the end of historic Hungary in 1918, all these tendencies were present and in conflict with each other. There was a *Fronde*, aristocratic in inspiration, inherited from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There was also a reforming spirit, which was to some extent conserva-

tive, but not rigidly traditionalist, and which was a survival of the era of Maria-Theresa and Metternich. And finally, there had been a revolutionary wave over Hungary, as there had been all over Europe, in the nineteenth century, but even the revolution could not dispense with certain concepts of liberty, which were aristocratic in origin.

In addition, Marxian Social Democracy was strong in Hungary, following upon the age of industrialization, and matured about 1900; it had to combine its forces with the traditionalist parties, which had an aristocratic concept of liberty and also an aristocratic leadership, for example, the Independence Party, led by Count Michael Károlyi (1875-1955), on the eve of the First World War. Between a rebellious traditionalism and a new sort of revolutionary mystique, the reforming spirit might have become centered in the Monarchy; the tragic heir to the Habsburg throne, The Archduke Francis-Ferdinand, was aware of this, but only in a tiny section of the ruling Hungarian Liberal party did he find any supporters, or advisors.¹⁵ This is the explanation of much of the anti-Hungarian bias which has been attributed to the victim of Sarajevo.

Hungary does not bear the sole responsibility for its sad fate in this century. But it did contribute considerably to one of the causes of its downfall. It adopted a revolutionary nationalism as its ideology, it combined a negative traditionalism with a national-revolutionary mystique, and deserted the spirit of conservative reform which could only reside in a strong Monarchy.

III. Past Failures and Future Hopes concerning a Middle Zone in Europe

The result of the 1914-18 war was to deprive Europe of a power in the Center, while the Peace Treaties brought nearer that moment, greatly feared by Hungarians ever since the partition of Poland, when Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism would clash over the ruins of historic

independences.¹⁶ The alliance of the newly created states in Central Europe, which went under the name of the Little Entente, proved futile, although it was set out in solemn documents; the one really valid alliance was the solidarity between Poland and Hungary, the two nations which had never signed a treaty, but which had a long and deeply-rooted tradition. While Poland was fighting the Nazi invader in the Second World War, Hungary kept her independence of view, although some of her interests coincided with those of the powers fighting the treaty-system of 1919-20. It is well known that Polish forces passed safely through Hungary on their way to rejoin the Allies in the West and the Middle East, without being hindered.¹⁷

Since the Soviet occupation in 1945, Hungary and Poland have shown their will to independence more strongly than any of the other captive nations. After the events of October 1956, Hungary has qualified once more for the leadership of a Center or Middle Region, which Europe now feels more than ever to be a necessity. There can be no true German re-integration into Europe unless Germany is separated from Russia by a Middle Zone, nor can Austria's freedom and neutrality prosper in the long run without such a Zone. In this, a restored Hungary would play a great part. Schemes for a federation of Europe will remain on paper, if they are based on a meaningless formula, such as the "equality" of nations. We may recall here the view of Jacques Bainville, the French historian, which he expressed at the time of the Peace Treaties of 1919-20: there can only be a federation between nations if one of them at least has sufficient tradition, and the vision and the strength to federate the others. History and geography designate Hungary and Poland to play this part. The third country which has shown a will to independence in recent years is Yugoslavia, the only state amongst those created to the detriment of old Hungary with which a rapprochement and a final reconciliation with Hungary seemed

possible, between the two wars.

Ultimately, it will depend upon the liberation and the restoration of such a Center, or Middle Zone, as to whether the long-term aim of European policy (so seldom spoken of, but which should never be lost from sight) will succeed. This aim is the re-integration of Russia into Europe. The most significant historical consequence of the Russian Revolution has been the awakening of Asian nationalism and the redistribution of power in Asia. But Russia is a European country, not an Asian one, although Russian expansion was always directed towards Asia, until recent years. Its "federating factor", as Bainville would say, is Christian, Slav and European; its empire was founded in the eighteenth century, which was the heyday of the European Monarchies, and which had the common civilization postulated by Leibniz.

With an integrated West, which would include Germany; with a Middle Zone, or Center, restored to the common ideas of Europe, this continent would once more be balanced. A new Aristotelian concept of the Middle Zone—this time meaning the Middle between Asia and America—might arise. The true Center is Europe itself, but inside Europe, the Middle runs between the Baltic, the Adriatic, and the Black Seas. Of all the countries in this region, Hungary belongs the least organically to the present Russian system.

The most useful way of bringing this about is unfortunately not the one we hear being advocated on both sides of the Atlantic; the whole Central European problem ought not to be reduced to the same old slogans and generalities as before. A great deal of harm has already been done under the pretext of the "self-determination" of peoples, which nobody wants to see being repeated or increased. The usurpers and upstarts thrown up by revolutions know only too well how to manufacture plebscites and majorities. Napoleon I began to explore this technique, Napoleon III nearly perfected it; some contemporary rulers and dictators of the near past have applied it

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even more skillfully than Napoleon III. Majority votes in countries where there is a parliamentary form of government are supposed to be subject to revision in a few years' time. Experience has shown that in these countries the parties remain more or less constant, with slight majorities of 1-2% or even less, which reflect a slight shift of emphasis within a solid traditional system. But countries can not be united and disunited every five years or so. Nations cannot be created and dissolved at fixed intervals.

Also let us face the fact that if it is easy to know what an individual is, it is not so easy to be sure what a nation is. There may possibly be a nation one day in Georgia or Azerbaijan. There is certainly today such a thing as a Polish nation, a Hungarian, a Croat, and a Czech nation; it is doubtful whether those nations combined into the new countries of 1918, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, ever reached the stage of a real Czechoslovak or Yugoslav nationality. Nations are not

racially or biologically superior to each other, but it is a fact that some are historical, old established and tangible realities, while others are not. The right principle which determines this is not plebiscites and elections, but respect for long established values, nations and states.

"Self-determination" and "inviolable sovereignty" are terms which can be invoked rightly or wrongly. We have often seen in the recent past how the most determined oppressors can invoke the principle of non-intervention whenever there is a threat of intervention in favor of their victims. The real self-determination appears not in one plebiscite or election, or in one temporary creation, but in a long series of facts, traditions, in a whole national history. Similarly, non-intervention is an agreement which is in reality only possible when the partners share common principles. The respective inviolable rights of the Emperors and Princes in the Golden Bull of Charles IV made sense only because the Empire was a recognized basic principle.

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The religious peace of Westphalia in 1648 would have been meaningless, if all the partners had not agreed on the Christian religion as a basis; some of them wished to retain the whole Catholic structure, while others adopted the minimum dogma of the Bible and the Holy Trinity. Peace treaties were possible between Christian and Moslems because both believed in God and considered that that belief gave a mutual moral guarantee.

Since geography and nationality are the twin pillars upon which Peace must be founded, there must likewise be a common concept of balance and security, and a common recognition of history between the two sides. Let us admit that in such things it is infinitely more difficult to find formulas which are acceptable to all, than it is in matters concerning faith and belief, and that we have every reason to regret that the conflict now dividing the world is not recognized to be fundamentally a religious one, in which not only theology but also jurisprudence have lost their authority in politics. Our peace efforts are fruitless because every common basis in theology or in respect for the law is lacking; and because we cannot even count on a mutual recognition of such physical postulates of politics as the "balance of powers".

If intervention of any sort has become impossible, then political thought is at an end, and the ethical side of politics as well. If the giant means at present available should prevent us forever from envisaging a right application of force, these giant means have made our power powerless and reduced us to a state of impotence. If, out of respect for the "self-determination of peoples," a moral wrong can be internationally tolerated, we are at an end of the state and of political order.

But perhaps our case is not as hopeless as it looks. Perhaps the policeman, immobilized by a heavy artillery gun, can be efficient again if he is given a baton. Perhaps the surgeon, incapable of action with a cavalry sword, can function if he is

given a knife six or seven inches long.

Perhaps the Hungarian tragedy of October, 1956, made some people begin to think seriously and positively on European politics, in concrete and definite terms of history, law, geography, and a living tradition, instead of solemn but meaningless and inapplicable generalities and devices. If so, many thousands of Hungarians will not have died in vain.

¹*The Politics of Aristotle*, VI.3-VII.1; Greek text with English translation and Commentary by H. Rackham. London: Heinemann, 1932.

²Cf. Jean Bodin; *La Methode de Phistoire*. Traduite et presentee par Pierre Mesnard. Publications de la Faculte de Lettres d'Alger, II-e serie pp. 288-90. Also Roger Chavire; *Jean Bodin, auteur de "La Republique"*. Paris, Champion editeur, 1914, pp. 349 sq.

³*Archiv fuer osterreichische Geschichte B.44; Aktenstucke zur Geschichte Franz Rakoczis und seiner Verbindungen mit dem Ausland*. Edited by Joseph Fiedler. Dokument No. 25, p. 493. *Archivum Rakoczianum*, edited by Imre Lukinich, Budapest, 1931 and the anonymous *Histoire des Revolutions de Hongrie*, La Haye, 1739. Baron L. Hagemuller; *Prince Francis Rakoczi II*, London 1906, with a foreword of Lord Bryce, Julius Szekfu; *Rakoczi in exile, Budapest*, 1913 (in Hungarian). S. also the present writer's "A Commentary on Hungarian Literature," *Castrop-Rauxel*, 1956, pp. 26-27, 133-36.

⁴Cf. the present writer's *Die geistigen Grundlagen der ungarischen Reformzeit 1790-1848* in the quarterly review *Der Donauraum*. Salzburg, 2-ter Jg. I. H., 1957, pp. 12-28.

⁵Friedrich von Gentz, *Staatsschriften und Briefe*. Munchen: 1921, B.I.S. 110.

⁶Principal sources: F. von Gentz, *Aus dem Nachlasse* (Leipzig, 1867); *Souvenirs of Comte de Saint-Aulaire* (Louis-Philippe's Ambassador to Vienna 1832-1841) published posthumously, Paris, Calmann-Levy, 1927, *Histoire de mon temps* by the Duc de Pasquier (Foreign Minister of Louis XVIII and Chancellor de France under Louis-Philippe); Hungarian sources on Metternich's policy; the memoirs of the Aulic Councillor Ludwig von Wirkner (in German; *Erlebnisse*, Pressburg, 1879) and of the Royal Vice-Chancellor Laszlo Szogyeny-Marich (Budapest, 1902-17) Count Anton Szecheny, *Die politische Fragen der Gegenwart*, Wien, 1851. Count Emil Dessewffy's memoranda and political correspondence (included in the Appendix to Francis Deak's collected works and speeches, Budapest, 1880, and in the Appendix, Vol. III, of Szogyeny-Marich, *op.cit.*). Cf. also a pamphlet by Paul Somssich: "Open letter to the editor

of the works & speeches of Francis Deak," Budapest, 1879 (in Hungarian). These sources are little explored and have not been recently edited or commented upon.

¹The sources on Austro-French relations in the eighteenth century are within access in *Recueil des instructions aux Ambassadeurs de France, Vol. I Autriche*, edited by Albert Sorel; in the diplomatic correspondence of Comte Mercy d'Argenteau (Ambassador of Joseph II to Louis XVI) edited by Alfred von Arneth, 1889; in Emperor Joseph II's diplomatic and family correspondence, edited and mostly kept in the French original, by Adolf Baer, Vienna, 1873-75.

²*La conspiration de Russie, Rapport de la Commission d'Enquete de St. Petersburg a S. M. l'Empereur Nicholas I.* Paris, 1826, p.70.

³Metternich's *Nachlass*, B.VIII. Dokument Nr. 1942, S. 430 sq.

⁴*Ibid.*, S. 496-97, and B. VIII, S. 72, Dok. Nr. 1703.

⁵Franz Grillparzer; *Saemtliche Werke*, Leipzig, 1875-80, B. XV. *Historische und politische Studien*, S. 93 sq.

⁶Eduard Heller; *Ein Vorkaempfer Mitteleuropas*, Wien, 1934. Cf. also the present writer's

"The Mystery of Prince Felix Schwarzenberg," in "Contemporary Review," London, May, 1956.

⁷Cf. Count Friedrich-Ferdinand von Beust; *Memoirs*, edited by Baron Henry Worms, M. P. London, 1887; and Thouvenel's diplomatic correspondence; *Le secret de l'Empereur*, Paris, 1889.

⁸Francis Deak's collected speeches & works, edited by Mano Konyi, Budapest, 1878-82, Vol. II, pp. 260-262. (In Hungarian).

⁹Principally Joseph Kristoffy (1857-1928, Minister of the Interior in 1905-6), *Memoirs*, in Hungarian: *Hungary's Calvary*, Budapest, 1925.

¹⁰Concerning the reaction of Hungarian contemporaries to the Polish partition cf. the analysis of the Hungarian situation in the last year of the eighteenth century in a confidential report of Archduke-Palatine Joseph, viceroy of Hungary, to his brother Emperor Francis, in the official correspondence of the former, edited by Alexander Domanovszky, in *Fontes Historiae Hungaricae*, Budapest, 1925, Doc. No. 26, Vol. I, pp. 129-166.

¹¹On Hungary in the Second World War: See C. A. Macartney, *A Hungarian History*, Edinburgh University Press, 1957.

The 'New Humanism' Twenty Years After

AUSTIN WARREN

The influence of Babbitt and More is alive in America.

IT IS A 'VULGAR ERROR' that, with the deaths of Babbitt and his ally, P. E. More, in the 1930's, the 'New Humanist' movement became extinct. An error. The movement 'went underground,'—or, more precisely, it changed from a pair of persons (like the Alexandrian Platonists, St. Clement and Origen, or the Cappadocian Fathers, SS. Basil and Gregory) into the persisting and multiform influences developed from the founders and their doctrines.

A 'movement' is created when a group of persons strong of intelligence and of will find themselves, for a period, in geographical and ideological proximity. It has always, as a 'movement,' its terminus—whether we think of the Oxford Movement of Keble and Pusey, or of New England Transcendentalism, or of the Anglo-American Imagists, or of the Nashville poet-critics literarily called Fugitives, politically called Agrarians.

Of the two Fathers,—whose name for their movement was no happier or more lucid than a Nashville Father's 'The New Criticism,'—Paul More may seem to have been the prophetic spirit, in his turning—so painful to his massive friend—from Sanskrit and the impressionistic literary criticism of the 'Shelburne Essays' to Christian Platonism (expounded in the four volumes of 'The Greek Tradition') and to communion with the Anglican Church;¹ for, with a few exceptions, the second generation of those influenced by Babbitt and More have become not only religious but Christians—Anglicans or Catholics.

T. S. Eliot, primarily known as a poet and literary critic, became an Anglo-Catholic. Professor Louis Mercier of Harvard, preaching the 'New Humanism' in both French and English, was at the same time a zealous Roman Catholic, and offered, with Babbitt's death-bed *imprimatur*, a chart which, equating their technical terms (for example, *grace* and *higher will*), sought to demonstrate the philosophical and theological correspondence between St. Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor, and Irving Babbitt.²

In my judgment, Babbitt was chiefly responsible—directly, and indirectly but potently—for this religious development of his doctrine. Though himself abstaining from participation, he gave weight always, not to 'liberal Protestantism' (dominant in his time) but to orthodoxy: indeed, in contrast to More's Anglicanism, Babbitt's Western sympathies were with "dogmatic and revealed religion," and with Rome rather than Canterbury. He admired Pascal, and more St. Francis de Sales—while of Abbé Bremond, author of the monumental and subtle *Histoire Littéraire du Sentiment Religieux en France*, yet suspect of leanings toward the 'Catholic Modernist' movement of the turn of the century, Babbitt is twice reported to have said that, were he Pope, he would put that priest's work on the Index as trying to reconcile certain subhuman phases of romanticism with Catholicism. Among the Catholics contemporary with him, his admiration went out to Gilson and Maritain and, in general, to the revivers of Christian Aristotelianism.

In his time, Babbitt's lot was to carry out his 'cause' in isolation not only from the Romance Department but from the energetic educational policy of Harvard's President, Charles W. Eliot, to which he stood in almost direct opposition. Babbitt never hesitated to attack the policy, notably in "President Eliot and American Education."³ Eliot represented the 'tendency' or 'trend' which, with notable exceptions, like that of Chicago under President Hutchins, has—unhappily—continued and indeed come to seem the 'American' and the 'democratic' theory of education: an ever increasing size of the 'student body'; more and more money spent on *buildings*; the shift from the College as the center to the Graduate School, conceived of in terms of specialists who have no common philosophical discourse with specialists of other 'departments.'

Meanwhile, in the College itself (always the 'real' Harvard), Eliot set up what he called the 'elective system'—partial paral-

lel to specialism in the graduate school. If the traditional view, which Babbitt continued to assert, held to a common curriculum, for Eliot every study (like every form of what came to be called in the Graduate School "research", or, more provincially, "research work") had the same rank as another: *De gustibus*: study whatever you like.

If President Eliot (himself, like Emerson, in large measure the product of a New England system which he declined to preach or enforce) treated all intellectual disciplines, and those scarcely to be called such, as 'equal,' John Dewey, a native of Vermont, powerfully represented at Columbia other heresies against which Babbitt steadily contended. Under Dewey's influence, 'Educationism' (i.e., the separation of subject matter, or, as it was often called, "content," from pedagogic methods) put its emphasis on pedagogy. Theoretical subjects, including first the classical languages and then the modern foreign languages, fell under Dewey's ban on the ground that they were not utilitarian, but luxuries for the leisure class, while 'vocational guidance' was stressed to a degree which has severely damaged the traditional humanist disciplines of philosophy, theology, and literature.

It can scarcely be said that Babbitt's attack on Eliot's and Dewey's 'progressive' education affected, in his life-time, more than his graduate students. But teach the ablest of your graduate students and they in turn will exert their influence on their disciples. In a very real way Babbitt was not a teacher of French but a teacher of teachers: like Socrates and Dr. Johnson (with whom, in *Man and Teacher*,⁴ he has often been compared) he was a teacher, not of a speciality, but of wisdom.

Primarily, Babbitt's steady (and often unrecognized) influence has been among university teachers. Many of these have not spread the word in print, but have, to a remarkable degree, followed Socrates and Plato in thinking that the Book, which cannot answer back, is far less important

than oral dialectic exerted on chosen young men of intellect and integrity. Several of them—Norman Foerster, for example—have had opportunity and the capacity to direct a School or College, appoint teachers not alien to the humane study of the Humanities, work out suitable methodologies, and, in general, to succeed in not losing, in the joy of administration, what should be its *telos*. The School of Letters at the University of Iowa, of which Foerster was Director from 1930 to 1944, failed in not being (except on paper) inclusive of the Classics and the modern foreign literatures as well as philologies; but Foerster did succeed in requiring of all liberal arts students four semesters of the 'Great Books' in translation; and he showed incredible skill in combining method with the ready and subtle surrender of rules and regulations when persons and principles should take precedence.

Since Babbitt's death, and especially in the last ten years, his effective opposition to 'progressive education' has been felt—

by many men in many places: at Harvard, by men as various as the late F. O. Matthiessen—a master of American studies, a left-wing socialist, and eventually an Anglican—and the 17th century scholar-critic, classicist and Anglican, Douglas Bush; at Iowa, where Foerster's influence has not ceased; at Michigan, where men as temperamentally disjunct as Norman Nelson and Warner Rice both acknowledge their debt to Babbitt; at Kenyon, where Babbitt's close disciple, President Gordon Chalmers, founded the *Kenyon Review*. But where shall one end such a list? Besides those who 'studied with him' literally, there were men like G. R. Elliott, of Amherst, who were sympathetic disputants. Like T. S. Eliot—though independent of him and arriving at a less rigid system—Roy Elliott found Babbitt wanting in two grave concerns, and himself sought to supply the lacks: Elliott became an Anglo-Catholic and a literary critic of literature.⁵

If one thinks of 'influences' and pro-

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grams,' it is difficult not to suppose that the 'great books' program at Columbia (begun by George Woodberry, a Harvard man, continued by John Erskine and then by Mark Van Doren—introduced at Iowa by Foerster) does not, at least indirectly, go back to Babbitt. Indeed, it is difficult not to associate all the neo-Aristotelian programs, whether of Hutchins and Adler, or of other brands (whether of Lane Cooper, or John Crowe Ransom, or Seymour Pitcher, or Norman Nelson, or Craig La Drière, or the neo-Scholastics) with Babbitt. All have in common the return to the *Poetics* and the return to a discipline of literature designed to supersede impressionism and expressionism.

Babbitt himself was not (with the possible exception of his course in Pascal), either a teacher of the 'great books' or a practitioner of the 'close analysis' of a text. But his course in 'Rousseau,' in its vast bibliography, offered anything but a list of 'secondary works' on Rousseau. It introduced one to Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Joubert's *Pensées*, the *Analects* of Confucius, the *Dhamma-pada*, Boethius, St. Augustine, Georg Brandes, Aristotle's *Ethics*, the *Imitation of Christ*.

Nominally a professor of French, he early became, and remained, both Hellenist and 'comparativist.' He wrote, in "Humanist and Specialist" (1926), "I have never been able to discover any sound reason why the candidates for the doctorate in the modern field should not be allowed to substitute, if they so desired, courses in the classics—let us say in Greek drama or Greek philosophy—for much or all of their mediaeval linguistics (e.g., Gothic)." When Harry Clark was about to leave for a post at Wisconsin, Babbitt said: "So you're going to teach American literature; well, then, you have to read a good deal of Shakespeare and Milton." He accepted no doctoral candidates, feeling that his so unspecialized and suspect sponsorship would damage their chances for a degree in French and caring rather to produce teachers of the humanities and teachers of men.

Eliot excepted, Babbitt had—at least in his early years—no student whose promise he more relied upon than Stuart Sherman, who had come to Harvard from Williams College and became a brilliant disciple and expositor of Babbitt. Through Babbitt, Sherman met More, then literary editor of the pre-'liberal' *Nation*. Subsequently he was offered a professorship at the University of Illinois, where he made a distinguished and highly influential place for himself. He published two 'humanistic books,' *On Contemporary Literature* and *Arnold*. Then, rapidly, he turned to *Americans* and *The Genius of America* (1922; 1923)—both books which, more 'American' and 'democratic' than 'humanistic,' disturbed Babbitt. In 1924, he resigned from Illinois and headed for New York to become literary editor of the *Herald-Tribune* spending his last two years in meeting 'living authors' and turning out a weekly essay praising Dreiser and Sherwood Anderson, renouncing his older 'standards' in behalf of 'vitality.'⁶ Sherman's criticism (which he ceased to practice with any rigor after 1917), is forgotten, while Babbitt's *Rousseau* and *Romanticism* has just been issued, paper-bound, for the intellectual young.⁷

But Sherman none the less had his use. He carried 'standards' into the Middle West, even if the standards were Babbitt's, not firmly grasped as his own, and if (not being his own but brilliantly parroted) he ended by losing what he had brought to others.

In his best days, he was a Regionalist: he taught that one did not have to live east of Albany to have civilised 'standards'; one did not have to be a Harvard man. One could live in Iowa, or Nebraska, or Michigan. 'Regionalism' was, in fact, the good old doctrine of Concord, Massachusetts: it was, paradoxically, Superregionalism.

The doctrine which Sherman preached—and then abandoned—was, less than three years after his death in 1933, the doctrine of the Nashville Agrarians, and still the

My Father, Zealous

My father, zealous that we know woods,
Lake, brake, marsh, beast, field, sky, bird
(The damsel fly,
The mourning dove,
The butternut),
Summers busied himself,
Beyond his means,
At a country cottage full to the west wind,
Primeval then
(But long since sold to a prosperous
butcher),
Where, by the shore,
Catching gar among the willow shoots,
Digging clams,
Watching waves that capped and broke
Across the sand,
We grew.

We grew. I tracked a muskrat. How?
By belly-crawling through the weeds
To pin his neck with my bare hand
(Though he cut my wrist)
And would not let him go.
My brother, now a priest,
Caught a turtle like a box.
(I, a soldier, belly-crawled from Rome to
Sassoleone.)

My father, never rich,
Would raise two sons in the image of him-
self.
My father, never vain,
Prayed
And taught us love,
Taught us where the bittern built,
Where the boneset grew,
Where the rattler sunned, where (a simple
man)
The bullfrog groaned in the duckweed
swamp
(The damsel fly,
The mourning dove,
The butternut).

JOHN A. LYNCH

mode of life, as well as doctrine, of John Ransom. And between 1933 and 1937 Seward Collins published his variously unique and memorable *American Review*, uniting, at least in print, the forces of the 'conservative right'—the Humanists, the Neo-Thomists, the Distributists (Chester-ton, Belloc, A. J. Penty, *et. al.*), and the Southern Agrarians. Babbitt's last essay appeared in its first number.

The most brilliant and influential man of those whom Babbitt influenced is undoubtedly T. S. Eliot (Harvard, 1910). Early an expatriate, he introduced the British to Babbitt in his first book of essays, *The Sacred Wood*, published in 1920. His laconic pages on Babbitt and More, written in the 'topic sentences' which he initiated as a mode of critical style, in contrast to Arnold's volubility, still stand as precociously just: "Babbitt, who shares so many of the ideals and opinions of Mr. More . . . , has expressed his thought more abstractly and with more form, and is free from a mystical impulse which occasionally gets out of Mr. More's hand. He appears more clearly than Mr. More, and certainly more clearly than any critic of equal authority in America or England, to perceive Europe as a whole; he has the cosmopolitan mind and a tendency to seek the centre. His few books are important, and would be more important if he preached a discipline in a more disciplined style."

Divergence unavoidably came with Eliot's later regretted nomination of himself as "royalist in politics, and Anglo-Catholic in religion." It would have come any way by virtue of the never uttered "and in literature a poet." But the apostasy was never equivalent to Sherman's: in the *Selected Essays* appear two essays on Humanism which Eliot first published in 1927 and 1929, and references to his Harvard teacher as a *point de repère* might be said to occur *passim*.

At the time of the Humanist controversy, when Eliot, already convinced that only the 'Catholic Church' could save civilization, was perhaps most remote from affec-

tionate loyalty, he could write: "Having myself begun as a disciple of Mr. Babbitt, I feel that I have rejected nothing that seems to me positive in his teaching. . . ."

Such a statement has the fine "economy" of Dr. Newman's Tract Ninety, on the Anglican 39 Articles; but I have no reason to doubt the sincerity of either Eliot or Newman. What was lacking from Babbitt's teaching? Not only 'royalism' and Christianity but any real concern with poetry as such.

To be sure, Babbitt can be found saying that "art rests primarily not on ethical but aesthetic perception"; but it cannot be said that he—who used the proof-text method, whether with Sophocles or Dante—practiced this canon. The master's later books treat the arts as the media of propaganda and the function of criticism as the exposure of the doctrine, salutary or (chiefly) sinister, for which they serve as vehicles.⁸

As a poet-critic, whose essays—one can see in retrospect—were always, whoever the Elizabethan dramatist nominally under discussion, addressed to the problem of how he should write his own poetry, Eliot could not but develop his own kind of essay—literary in a sense Babbitt neither could, nor cared to, write.⁹ Eliot was the founder—or, with Pound, the co-founder—of a new race of critics—critics like Yvor Winters and John Ransom and Allen Tate.

To Babbitt, they might have seemed 'aesthetic' or 'formalist' in a pejorative sense. If so, he would have misjudged men who could say, with Eliot, "I have rejected nothing that seems positive in his teaching."

The final and soundest influence of Babbitt seems to me to rest in Eliot and his 'fellow-travellers' who start with a deep—and technical—concern with literature as an art—indeed, insist on an aesthetic criticism of it as initial—but go on to put it in its cultural and metaphysical and theological perspective—who call for the double discipline.¹⁰

Despite much dissent from the books of

Yvor Winters, I heartily assent to a pair of texts from him to whom, though never Babbitt's student, still less disciple, he has always acknowledged an "indebtedness." In 1930, Winters wrote: "Mr. Babbitt's reiteration of certain ethical values . . . where it has influenced such younger men as R. P. Blackmur, Francis Fergusson, Robert Penn Warren, T. S. Eliot, Allen Tate, and others,—men who can incorporate these values . . . is doubtless good." But

"his analysis of literary principles appears to me to be gravely vitiated by an almost complete ignorance of the manner in which the moral intelligence actually gets into poetry."

One man, even a sage or a saint, cannot do all things. If the wreaths piously laid on his grave may one day wither, the man pronounced dead will, when need be, voluntarily descend from Nirvana that civilization may not perish from the earth.

¹Cf. especially More's *The Catholic Faith* (1931) and *Anglicanism . . .*, edited by More and F. L. Cross (1935), with an introduction by More on "The Spirit of Anglicanism".

²L. J. A. Mercier, *Le mouvement humaniste aux Etats Unis* (1928) and *The Challenge of Humanism* (1933); the "chart" of equivalences between Scholastic philosophy and Babbitt's is given on p. 169.

³*The Forum*, Jan. 1929. Characteristically, Babbitt treats President Eliot, the admired Great Administrator of the University at which Babbitt taught, with the calm objectivity of a scientist studying a specimen.

⁴*Irving Babbitt, Man and Teacher* (Edited by Frederick Manchester and Odell Shepard, with a biographical sketch by Dora D. [Mrs. Irving] Babbitt, 1941). This is the only memorial to an American professor save for *F. O. Matthiessen: A Collective Portrait* (Edited by Paul Sweezy and Leo Huberman, 1950)—which is a *Vita Sancti*. The ordinary famous professor is commemorated, upon his retirement or death, by fellow-specialists contributing articles in the same 'field' to a *Festschrift*.

⁵Cf. especially Elliott's brilliant, perceptive, and warm *Humanism and Imagination* (1938).

⁶Austin Warren recorded his pain at a 'lost leader' in "Humanist into Journalist," *Sewanee Review*, July 1930.

⁷*Rousseau and Romanticism*, Meridian Books, N.Y., 1955.

⁸Babbitt's nearest approaches to literary criticism, as distinguished from 'criticism'—e.g., Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*—are to be found in his brilliant introductions to school-text editions of Renan's *Souvenirs* (1902), Racine's *Phedre* (1910), and *The Masters of Modern French Criticism* (1912)—the last, however, a criticism of critics, not of poets, dramatists, and novelists.

⁹Eliot has confirmed this insight of mine in his 1956 "The Frontiers of Criticism", included in *On Poetry and Poets* (1957), 117: "The best of my literary criticism . . . consists of essays on poets and poetic dramatists who had influenced me. It is a by-product of my private poetry-workshop; as a prolongation of the thinking that went into the formation of my own verse."

¹⁰An admirable illustration of the 'double discipline' is Maritain's *Creative Intuition in Art* [i.e., Painting] and *Poetry*, N. Y., 1953.

A lottery as a means to efficiency and integrity.

Make Tax Honesty Rewarding---a Proposal

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG

I

ANYONE WHO FAILS to declare his income to the tax collector, or who declares less than he should, in effect, gambles; he may reap a dishonest gain—the tax he did not pay; and he risks the punishments the law provides. Those who, presumably in ignorance or doubt, make improper deductions also gamble, albeit less deliberately and without becoming criminally liable. The chances are very much in favor of those who gamble in this manner. They may get away with paying less than they owe. If the collector catches them, they lose practically nothing. They pay what they should have paid in the first place and perhaps a fairly small interest or penalty charge. Thus the honest taxpayer, who is scrupulous and informed as well, abstains from a gamble which offers little risk of loss and a good chance of gain.

It is good to know that there are many conscientious taxpayers. But there is no reason to tempt them as strongly as we

do at present. On the contrary, we should make honesty as rewarding as possible. To be sure, more extensive auditing would be financially rewarding for the government. It would also distribute the tax burden more equitably and decrease the likelihood of successful tax evasion, and thus the temptation to try it. Yet, the number of honest and scrupulous taxpayers would surely increase if they could look forward to a material reward as well as avoidance of the risk of punishment. As for the dishonest, they still would risk punishment—but in addition they would lose a possible reward.

II

Tax honesty could be materially rewarded by giving to everyone who declares his personal (this excludes corporations) taxable income the option of participating in a lottery. To exercise the option, a small fee, e.g. \$2-\$10, should be added to the tax declaration. The taxpayer then selects a combination of numbers with the total

of digits amounting to perhaps six. Combinations of 2-6 digits are drawn by the tax collector. The taxpayer whose number combination is identical to the one that has been drawn wins. The winnings should be the greater the more digits there are in the combination. (For instance, the taxpayer may select either two combinations of three digits each: (1) 379-233; or one of four and one of two digits: (2) 5321-63; etc. If either combination of the first selection is drawn, his winnings should be smaller than if the first combination of the second selection is drawn. Of course, the winnings of a two digit combination should be still smaller, if it is drawn, and the winnings of a six digit combination should be the highest.) In this manner the taxpayer may choose between a lesser probability of winning a higher prize—e.g. a six digit combination—and a higher probability of winning a lower prize—e.g. a two digit combination. The winnings may also be scaled according to the fee paid—unless it is desired to keep it uniform. These prizes could be a considerable positive incentive to make out tax returns.

But the winnings might be also varied according to the size of the declared taxable income. For instance, for incomes below \$6,000, 400% of the declared taxable income (after all allowable deductions) might be added to the base prize. For incomes between \$6,000 and \$10,000, 300% of the taxable income should be added. For incomes from \$10,000 - \$15,000, 250%; from \$15,000 - \$20,000, 150%; from \$20,000 - \$30,000, 100% from \$30,000 - \$50,000, 50%; above \$50,000, 25%.

The illustrated scale of additions to the base prizes is crude, and could be easily refined. But it suffices to illustrate the possibility of (1) giving a positive incentive to make out an income tax return, (2) giving an incentive to make out a complete and accurate return by means of additions to winnings scaled according to the size of the taxable income. The usefulness of this scheme is in the incentives it furnishes

to the bulk of taxpayers whose declarations could not be audited with the care given to the highest brackets, and who are tempted to evade some tax for this very reason. For incomes above \$20,000, the scheme could not greatly increase the incentive to declare income fully. The returns of a high income bracket taxpayer are necessarily prepared in the expectation of being scrutinized carefully. Moreover, the prospective winnings would have to be larger than warranted by the probable gains to the tax collector to induce anyone in the very high income brackets to forego a contemplated tax evasion. Yet if the option were confined to lower income brackets it would become an incentive for those who make over \$20,000 to declare lower taxable incomes. The scheme must be so applied as to increase the incentive to declare fully in the lower income brackets without decreasing it even in the highest. Winnings might be subjected to taxation as part of the income of the year for which the income tax declaration on which they are based was made. (This would decrease the temptation to reduce efforts to gain taxable income in the year in which the winnings are received.) The effect would be to decrease further the disposable (net) winnings of the higher relative to the lower income brackets.

The prizes could be financed out of the fees of the participants. They could be restricted to the total amount of fees collected, at least in the long run.

The base prizes should be sizable even if few. This is likely to be more effective than many small winnings. Experience shows that the expectation of high winnings increases the attractiveness of what is to be undertaken out of all proportion to its aggregate value. Alfred Marshall remarks that a government therefore "should offer a few good prizes in every department of its services." Other economists, such as Joseph Schumpeter, have pointed out that the independent businessman is in business independently not so much because of his average profits as for the chance, however

low from an actuarial viewpoint, of becoming a millionaire.

It may be objected that not every taxpayer who fulfills his obligation would be materially rewarded. But neither is every businessman, or civil servant. All, however, have the hope and an equal chance to win. This may be a considerable incentive to declare income. Further, the prospect of possibly reducing one's winnings through a dishonest declaration will act as an incentive toward a full declaration of income. The incentive is likely to be effective although the chances of winning would be fairly small. The taxpayer, who because of such a chance declares his income, or declares his income more honestly than he otherwise would have done, may not act very rationally. But a great deal of economic activity—not to speak of straight gambling—is activated by such non-rational or para-rational hunches—compounded with rational methods. People are willing and eager to take chances. The difficulty with taxes has been that the

chances were given to the not-so-honest citizen. The conscientious one had no chance as far as material rewards go.

I have sketched one type of technique that could be used. I am by no means sure that it is the best; I know there are many refinements and alternatives, which I must refrain from discussing since my present purpose is merely to illustrate the nature of the proposal. I shall now indicate the line of reasoning which leads me to discount the moral objections of which I am aware.

III

Gambling seems wicked to many people. It violates Puritan canons of morality which are deeply imbedded in American life. The proposed scheme appears to involve gambling—a lottery—and this might be offensive to those who object to lotteries as immoral. Yet, if I understand the nature of their objections correctly, they cannot properly be directed against this proposal.

Some rest their objection on the purpose to which the gambling entrepreneur may

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American Opinion, Belmont 78, Massachusetts

put his profits. Surely the purpose cannot be objectionable here. In fact, the entrepreneur—the government—need not profit directly at all from the operation. But if the government were to profit, the citizens, for whom the profits would be used, would not lose. Others object that the activity involved in gambling accomplishes no useful purpose by itself. This objection is clearly not applicable here. The inducement to honesty would be useful both materially and morally.

A more serious objection is that gambling may entice people, lured by the chance of great winnings, to risk and lose money that they should not risk. They may thus deprive their dependents of support due them, or deprive themselves of their sustenance. This fear may be justified with regard to games of chance, e.g. betting on dice, cards, or horses. But not with regard to the proposal I have outlined, for the risk—the possible loss—is limited to the \$2-\$10 fee. Any additional expense such as might be entailed by a more honest declaration of income surely is not objectionable to even the strictest moralist. Indeed, to the extent to which the proposal is an effective incentive to honesty in tax declaration, gambling — taking one's chances by not declaring, or by under-declaring—would be reduced.

Since participation would be optional and the winnings financed out of the fees of the participants, those who wish neither directly nor indirectly to participate are able to stand entirely aloof. Possible fears, that the distribution of rewards to taxpayer participants, who are chosen by lot, might cause some, who would not otherwise do so, to gamble elsewhere, perniciously and illegally, seem unjustified. The governmental sanction of marital intercourse is hardly the cause of extramarital intercourse.

There remains one objection which is indeed the original Puritan objection against any form of gambling: that it is immoral to receive a gain without having

deserved it by rendering a service. The original Puritan objection thus was largely directed against the possibility of winning. As it is most frequently phrased today, though stemming from this very source, the objection appears to rest more on the probability of losing. In the original form, from which it still draws its strength, the objection rests on faith rather than on reason. If one considers today's more frequently heard formulation—that it is the probability of losing which makes gambling wicked—it clearly could not affect the proposal under discussion. The losses are too insignificant. One may question also whether those who would object to the proposal for essentially religious reasons should not be content to refrain from participating. Yet some may not be so content. It is therefore useful to stress that the proposed operation does not involve the gambling considered wicked by religious objectors.

In the first place, the income which is declared by the taxpayer is, to the extent to which any economic operation may be so viewed, the result of his efforts. Thus he obtains the option to participate in the lottery and to make a possible gain thereby only inasmuch as he has rendered services. In the second place, the winnings are, to some extent, in proportion to the value of the services he rendered—to the income which he declares and to his honesty in declaring it. Finally, in contrast to gambling, the operation proposed is economically useful. Surely if it does anything, it will be an incentive to honesty and morality. The demoralization that gambling might produce could not occur here.

Thus, gambling may imply undeserved rewards, and misfortunes burdening dependents whom we do not wish to be so burdened; gambling may further have a general demoralizing effect, leading to deprecation of honest work. But the proposed scheme would in some measure reward those deserving; not all, but at least some deserving people. It would reward them for services rendered, not for gam-

bling risks taken. It would reward them in some proportion to the services they rendered and to the honesty with which they declared their incomes deriving therefrom. It would not impoverish them or bestow misfortunes on anyone. (Indeed, it may be said that the hope of gain, even if ultimately disappointed, may in the interim constitute more than enough value to compensate for the fee spent by the non-winning participants.) Rather than having a demoralizing effect, one may reasonably

hope that the scheme will give people a further incentive to strive to gain and declare a high income. It will reduce the inclination to gamble with tax evasion.

Progress, Alfred Marshall has pointed out, "depends on the extent to which the strongest and not merely the highest forces in human nature can be utilized for the increase of the social good." There is much to gain and nothing to lose by rewarding taxpayers who declare their incomes with honesty.

We Urge
MODERN AGE Subscribers to Renew Promptly

Burke in Perspective

THOMAS I. COOK

Burke and the Nature of Politics: The Age of the American Revolution, by Carl B. Cone. *Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957.*

THAT EDMUND BURKE WAS A political organizer and party manager is a commonplace. That his central concern as a statesman was the preservation of British institutions as inherited from the past, and the needful elimination of injustices and corruptions which threatened their stability, is likewise generally accepted. Burke's responses to affairs and issues in other parts of the world, from the American colonies through India to France, initially came from, and were sharpened by, concepts of British dignity, power, and influence, and the security of England.

Magnanimity toward other peoples, respect for institutions prevalent elsewhere, and bitterness against ideological revolutionaries all came from, and were a broadening of, his central preoccupations. Even his loyalty to the land where he was born was limited and shaped by the larger perspective of British national interest, realistically construed on an idealized concep-

tion of past achievement and present role. His works and days were given to a search for appropriate instruments which might secure stability in change; and to inform British politics with a principled vision of past growth, present greatness, and future destiny, against the perspectives of man's human finiteness, and the vision of eternity.

Himself mortally fallible, Burke reconciled these great purposes with his own ambitions and interests, and with the struggles for careers and rewards of relatives and connections. Where there was possible conflict of interest and duty, he honestly failed to perceive it, and was therefore able to attain a rationalized coherence without conscious calculation. His whole public life achieved a unity in advocacy and action on behalf of a liberal conservatism, liberating just because preservative and grounded in tradition, in the social inheritance as a living past, to be kept alive and healthy, and so surely though slowly improving.

Burke's own and his family's interests, and their consequent claims on public and government, appeared to him legitimate because legitimized by service to that purpose, and by that criterion he was able to distinguish more generally between cor-

ruptions in public life which necessitated reform, and demanded excision, and those which were legitimate rewards for creative service. In office, he caused to be made administrative changes in accord with his own principle, and to the detriment of pocket and influence. With an integrity which in part was consequent on too easy judgment from a distance, he in due course sacrificed party and broke long-lived friendships in the service of those same principles when he deemed them, and the stability of his own land, fundamentally threatened by the theory and practice of the French Revolution.

The preceding account, I think, is a fair summary of Burke's course and intent, acceptable alike to those who admire and defend him and to critics aghast at what they deem his powers of self-deception and rationalization, and convinced of the wrong-headedness of his doctrines and of the sinister consequences of their influence. I intend, in any event, to use it as basis for assessing Professor Cone's book; with the caveat that it is hazardous—though for scholarly purposes it often is imperative—to assess the theses of a work in progress, without the perspective of the whole, and lacking the benefit of the author's final summary.

The present volume goes only to the eve of the second Rockingham ministry. By utilizing the Burke papers recently made available—the author's avowed warrant for his undertaking—Professor Cone seeks here to put Burke's earlier career in new perspective; he likewise undertakes to give a more adequate account of Burke's off-stage life and avocational concerns, which yet constitute the context, and give the contours, of his central preoccupation.

On the political front, Cone strives to show that Burke was, in those years, first and foremost the party organizer and manager; that he developed a doctrine of party and sought to implement it in practice; that here was his real contribution, as transition from the old order of loose faction and royal influence, whose context

was the interest and power of a limited class which treated public affairs as a private preserve, toward the new order—for long still embryonic despite Burke's work—of principled, organized, and disciplined parties genuinely concerned with public issues and national welfare, appealing to and dependent upon an electorate ultimately to be based upon universal suffrage.

That Burke was not only regarded in these years by many of his contemporaries as dominantly a party man, in the service of Rockingham and the Rockingham Whigs; but that he also developed a new and ultimately fruitful theory and practice of the role of party and party discipline, Cone successfully demonstrates. He notes the efforts, and the short-run self-sacrifice, Burke made to prevent individual acceptance of office by members of the faction without concern for the collective interest; and likewise to prevent Rockingham and the party from going into office with brief and limited power. He observes also Burke's insistence that the party does have, and must have, a program grounded in principles; and must take office only when it can do so with a free hand to effectuate its principles: that is, on its terms, and not as an escape-operation for the king. Too great eagerness for office makes for short tenure where the king is not friendly, and gives no basis for achievement of coherent policies.

Such an analysis does make clear that Burke was moving away from notions of politics as a private preserve of intriguers, temporary alliances, and factions. Yet Burke was working within the established system, which he defended, and as Cone also insists, Burke had respect for the aristocracy, the big landowners. He had no sympathy for democracy; and, far from supporting, strenuously opposed parliamentary reform, the broadening or rationalizing of the franchise. What he demonstrated to the Rockingham faction was the consonance of enlightened self-interest and the support of principles, which he made

coherent for them. His was no clear teaching of the desirability of a two-party system, of the duty of an opposition to oppose—or of his Majesty's loyal opposition. His strategy and tactics were expedient operations within the established order; and, if he is a precursor of modern parties, he is so by inadvertence. Actually (though here Mr. Cone's second volume may require modified judgment) it would be exceedingly hard to show continuity between Burke's views and modern party organization; and here I venture to suggest that, for all the attempts to push origins back, and to discover early seeds and embryos, the modern system of government and party in England does clearly emerge, as was once taught, in the Victorian period, with Gladstone and Disraeli. Not Walpole, nor even the younger Pitt, was the first real prime minister, any more than Burke was the first party manager.

The meaning of Burke's party efforts is clarified by his own concept of the member of Parliament, and by his relation to the electors of Bristol, which Cone describes fairly and fully. Doctrine and behavior were here compatible. Burke insisted that local service—and he did his share—must be subordinated to national interest; and that the member, by qualification, location, and contacts, was in a better position to judge the national interest than those he represented, too often biassed by self-interest and uninformed as to the total situation, and lacking in a feeling for enlightened expediency.

In view of subsequent long-lived debate as to the nature of representation, and the use of Burke's doctrine as authority by one side, it would be erroneous to argue that such a position was in itself incompatible with later political practice. What is revealing, however, is that Burke, though he had stood for Bristol to acquire its influence and gain a seat for the Rockingham party, resolutely resisted any urgings to cultivate that constituency until too late; when, sure of defeat if he fought the election, he declined to poll. But both

the inaction which made such a step necessary, and the content of his speech itself, suggest the degree to which Burke was distant from modern parties and politics; and was (as Cone notes) less than fully in harmony with the political intrigue of his own day. No doubt the failure was owing in part to temperament, as Cone emphasizes; and is testimony to the degree to which, for all his politicking, Burke was no politician—not in the modern sense. The real point is, however, that Burke's concepts of politics and his practice were coherent because principled.

The defects in Mr. Cone's approach, and the limitations of the thesis he espouses, are revealed in his treatment of Burke on the American colonies: which, as the sub-title of the book suggests, is the secondary focus of this volume.

As against the vulgar concept, too often accepted by scholars, that Burke was not only the friend of the colonies, but also was a leading supporter of them in their struggle for independence, Cone is forcefully corrective. With justice, he insists that Burke did not seek or desire this independence; that his purpose was to prevent the demand and the struggle, and to preserve the Empire as it then was; and that, once the die was cast, Burke lost interest in the colonies, becoming reservedly critical and perhaps, behind the reserve, hostile toward the new United States. He put the colonies in Coventry; and the contrast before and after speaks volumes.

Burke's purpose before the event did not differ, therefore, from that of his opponents in British politics, the government of the day. The differences were in the strategy to be pursued, and the perspective behind it. Burke saw the whole empire; realized that the colonists believed themselves to be endowed with English rights of Whig derivation; recognized the justice of their viewpoint; and perceived that, were it conceded, their demands met reasonably, and their grievances removed, the whole empire would be strengthened. He

sought to preserve, not to destroy, the authority of the British sovereign: he attacked legalism and the narrow self-interest of mercantilist interests as destructive of a long-term mutuality of interest which he thought compatible with British hegemony.

Aware of the rightful claims of Britain, and respectful of the American interests of the members of the English governing class, he sought to reconcile these with what he felt were just demands by the colonists. Because the British government, and the interests behind it, proved niggardly in concession, the quarrel grew hot, and the colonial demands broader and more emphatic. In the light of his overriding purpose, and governed by the changing circumstances, Burke moved toward more generous concessions, in which direction alone stood some chance for success.

Mr. Cone thinks these moves a case of "too little and too late"—on the score that, by the time Burke got to advocating more liberal concessions, the colonists already wanted still more, and were unwilling to settle for less. Burke, out of touch with their temper, irrelevantly urged today what they might have welcomed yesterday. This criticism perhaps is just; and it is even conceivable that a prompt British acceptance of Burke's views at the outset would have whetted, not slaked, colonial appetites. Later, concession doubtless would have achieved little: it is a commonplace of politics that, while the generosity of firm strength begets both admiration and submission, belated reform based on uncertainty and weakness normally encourages and strengthens opposition, begets new demands, and ends in resistance.

Conservative magnanimity of Burke's sort has to possess governing powers, and to use these promptly; or it becomes irrelevant, losing both its enlightenment and its efficacy. The point is not that Burke misjudged the colonists, but that the liberal conservative, then and now, finds himself in an impossible position when confronted by intransigence on the one side and exasperation on the other. The

historical outcome may then be tragic; and it at best is unlikely, except on a long and particular perspective of national destiny, to be the best in its day available to statesmanship. In particular, the difficulties of enlightened conservatism are great when vested interests at home confront demands for independence in colonies where advanced doctrines of freedom have taken root. The enlightenment of moderate conservatism needs to be counterbalanced by the moderation of enlightened liberalism. That achievement, arising from shared culture, may reflect and strengthen consensus. But in relations between peoples, and especially unequal peoples, the likelihood of discovering each in the right place is not great.

The root criticism of Professor Cone's analysis is, then, that he does not assess Burke as a philosophic statesman; nor seriously estimate the strength and weakness of his position, which, given all the flaws of personality and faults of interest, still had coherence from the outset. Burke on principle developed — and applied — his anti-doctrinaire doctrine; but his insistence on the pragmatically expedient and the politically possible course always was subject to, and arose from awareness of, direction and goal. It is fatal to overemphasize the play of politics; and deliberately to take the view of Burke's contemporaries, that he was a pure politician, is myopic. Cone's view that Burke did not become a political thinker before the *Reflections* — with the implication that his earlier teaching is retrospective construction — is error: the essential ideas were formed (though not known to his contemporaries) before his entry into public life.

At root, I fear, this book suffers from its author's lack of grounding as either political philosopher or political scientist. His criteria for assessment are not clear and coherent; the particular judgments are almost random, without over-all context.

That root judgment made, I must add that Professor Cone also fails as a biog-

rapher. He brings in, true, the whole background of Burke's public life; he comments on his many interests and associations. Nevertheless, no picture of the whole man in his setting emerges. Discussion of Burke as theorist of aesthetics, as collector of pictures, as patron of artists, as landed gentleman, as agronomist, as clubman and associate of intellectual and cultural leaders, as head of a family, as ardent and generous host, and as inept manager of personal finances and unfortunate investments, does not end in a rounded picture. These reports, rather, though so conscientiously made, interrupt the central record of political life. With some exasperation, one senses that the materials for a broader biography, which would clarify man and times, politics and culture, philosophy and

political theory, all are present. They need to be used. Given our rich resources in biographical materials for this period; given the special quality of personalism in its culture and public life; given modern sciences usable by the historian, by happy consonance the path is open for real reinterpretation of an age in all its variety, and with deepened meaning.

Edmund Burke, on Mr. Cone's own showing, is peculiarly suited to such treatment. For we now have the materials; and he, so deeply committed to the ideal pattern of his day, and in love with its aristocratic order, developed a range and depth of feeling not readily reconcilable with that order on its own premises. To have missed this chance is a pity. One can only hope that another will take it.

The People Versus Socrates Revisited

The perplexities of the Athenian jury are our own problem.

WILLMOORE KENDALL

MY TOPIC: PLATO'S TEACHING about "freedom" of thought and speech. My target: Liberal teaching about freedom of thought and speech, and the Liberal claim that it traces back somehow to Plato, to, concretely, the *Apology* and the *Crito*. My target, stated in other words: The freedom of thought and speech doctrine of J. S. Mill's *Essay on Liberty*, which let us call the simon-pure doctrine of freedom of thought and speech; and that sentence in Mill's *Essay*, "Mankind cannot be too often reminded that there was once a man named Socrates," etc., where the clear implication is: Keep yourself reminded of Socrates, and what happened to him as a result of limitations imposed upon freedom of thought and speech, and you will accept as a matter of course the thesis of Mill's *Essay*, namely: "... there ought to exist the fullest liberty of professing and discussing, as a matter of ethical conviction, any doctrine, however immoral it may be considered."

My thesis: Mankind should be reminded that there was once a man named Socrates,

and another man named Plato who, out of a profound preoccupation with his execution, the events that led up to his execution, and the meaning of his execution, wrote about him; that there is in the *Apology* and the *Crito* a teaching that bears directly upon the problem of freedom of thought and expression; *but* that, as we steep ourselves in that teaching, and make it our own, we become less and less available to the appeal of "open society" doctrines like Mill's and, in our own day, Karl Popper's (who, however, unlike most opponents of the more-or-less-closed society, does *not* claim Socrates and Plato as allies). My own thesis restated: We have for several decades been hearing of the *Apology* and the *Crito* from writers who are themselves committed to Mill's position, who turn to them for reenforcement of the symbol that (as I believe) dominates their own thinking about freedom of thought and speech, and who (whether deliberately or carelessly let us not try to say) ignore in them such emphases as do not accord with what they are looking for.

What symbol? The symbol, of course, of Socrates the Bearer of the Word standing with unbowed head in the presence of his accusers and judges, who hold the Word in contempt; of the Servant of Truth being punished, murdered rather, for the truth that is in him; that of the Wise Man being sacrificed by fools who, had they but listened to him, would have been rescued from their folly. That symbol, I contend, lies at the root of the simon-pure doctrine, dominates the thinking of exponents of that doctrine, and, in any discussion of the merits of that doctrine, will be brought forward sooner or later as the "clincher" that resolves all freedom of thought and speech issues in favor of the Mill-Popper position. Mill, in a word, has had his way: we are forever being reminded and by men who, like Mill, spend their lives opposing Plato's teaching on all other problems (and do not, by ordinary, light candles at the altars of the ancients) that there was once a man named Socrates and a court named the Assembly, that Plato set down a record of the transaction between them in order to warn all future societies of the danger and wickedness of all such interferences with freedom of expression, and, I repeat, that that settles that. And my thesis, restated once more, becomes: That that symbol, though it can be pieced together out of elements that are indeed to be found in the *Apology* and the *Crito*, is *not* the symbol that emerges from close reading of those two documents. That Plato's own symbol, as it emerges both from the manifest content of the two documents (that is, from what Socrates actually says) and from that which, upon meditation, we find Plato the dramatist to be saying to us by his "handling" of the story, is infinitely more complex, and points us along toward a deeper meaning, oceans apart from the teaching of Mill's *Essay*.

Let us look first at the manifest content of the *Crito*: Socrates puts to his friend Crito, who has arranged for his escape and is urging him to flee, and then answers for him, a number of questions.

Should we, in determining our conduct, concern ourselves about what "people", that is, the Many, will say, or only about the opinion of good men? Only about the latter. Is Crito correct in supposing that the Many must be feared because they can do the greatest evil? Certainly not: the Many can *not* do the greatest evil, because they are unable to make a man foolish; nor can they do the greatest good, because they are unable to make a man wise. By what, then, should a man be guided in determining his conduct? By *reason*—or, to be more precise, by that reason which, upon reflection, seems best. Are we ever entitled, because of the fortune of the moment, to drive a wedge between principle and conduct, or to abandon the rules regarding right and wrong that we have hitherto professed? No indeed. To whom, when we face a problem involving the just and the unjust, or good and evil, do we properly defer? Not to the Many, but to the one man who possesses understanding. Which is to be valued—life itself, life as such, or a good life, a life which is just and honorable? We should prefer a good life. Take the man whose reason tells him a certain course of action is right: should he be deterred from adopting that course of action by, for example, his duty to educate his children, or by what people will say of his friends' failure to rescue him from the consequences of that which he is about to do, or other suchlike considerations? By no means; all such considerations are, clearly, irrelevant to the choice he must make. Does a wrong action become less wrong because the agent is acting in response to wrong, or injustice? Doing wrong is always evil, always dishonorable.

These questions and answers, Socrates must be saying, are logically prior to any question that can be asked concerning the immediate issue—that is, whether he is to avail himself of the opportunity to escape ("Be persuaded by me," Crito pleads with him, "and do as I say."). Why logically prior? Because any answers Socrates can

give to the question, "Shall he leave the prison against the will of the Athenians?" will be found to *presuppose* a set of answers to them; which is to say on the level of method, the level, I believe, on which Plato always wants most watching, that we must be clear in our minds about *ethics* before we can attempt anything in the way of a political decision.

Ethical inquiry is *prior to and different from* political inquiry—prior to and different from and, in consequence, certain to call for its own techniques and procedures as, in its turn, political inquiry, when we come to it, will involve *its* own techniques and procedures. Ethics, in a word, *before* politics, which is a subsequent inquiry, to be presided over by, to take its point of departure from, but in no circumstances to be confused with, ethics, and itself, in consequence, *ethically neutral though ethically committed*. Political inquiry, to put it a little differently (Plato says it, I think, somewhat more clearly in the *Republic*), is an intellectual adventure in which man engages when he already holds in his left hand a developed ethical and (we may now add) theological position, and wishes to hold in his right hand the answer to a certain range of questions (e.g., Shall Socrates avail himself of the opportunity to escape?) that are themselves always better stated, and better handled, if stated and handled in an ethically neutral manner. And the latter, I contend, normally involves for Plato the building of a *model*, itself I repeat ethically neutral, which when built enables the man who holds it in his right hand and a corpus of ethical and theological doctrine in his left hand, to dispose of that certain range of questions. Political inquiry, in fine, is an ethically neutral stage of the total inquiry that conduces from the raising of ethical and theological problems to, off at the end, ethically oriented political *decision*.

Let us, with all that in mind, follow Socrates through the political argument of the *Crito* to the decision *not* to escape, for only so can we fully understand the bear-

ing of that decision, resting as it does equally on the ethical argument and the political argument, upon freedom of thought and speech. Let us, in a word, isolate the *political theory* of the *Crito*, which I see as involving the following steps:

One: No State can subsist in which individuals set aside legal rules. (We are not, be it noted, asking for the moment whether or not the State should subsist, but merely what is necessary to its subsistence.)

Two: One of the rules that must be observed, (must not, that is to say, be set aside *if the State is to subsist*) is that according to which sentences must be carried out.

Three: For Socrates to escape would be to set aside the legal rule according to which sentences must be carried out.

Four: For Socrates to escape would be to overturn, to destroy, insofar as he is capable of doing so ("so far as in him lies"), the State.

Five: The citizen of the State owes his existence to the State's marriage laws, under which his parents begot him.

Six: As a matter of record, Socrates has never registered any complaint against *his* State's marriage laws.

Seven: The citizen owes his formation to the State's laws regulating the nurture and education of children.

Eight: As a matter of record, Socrates has registered no complaint against the laws regulating the nurture and education of children.

Nine: The citizen stands in the same relation to the Laws as the child to the father—not, that is to say, in the relation of an equal to an equal.

Ten: For the citizen to ask whether the Laws are treating him unjustly, and, having answered that question affirmatively, to contemplate doing to the Laws that which they are doing to him, and so destroy the Laws, is to upset the relation that exists, by definition, between them; the child, by definition, does not return the blow he

receives from the father.

Eleven: Once the man of understanding grasps the relation between citizen and State, he sees that the citizen will endure in silence when the State punishes him, will follow when the State leads him into battle, and will obey when the State commands him.

Now: let us call that Phase One of the argument, and let us ask in passing, before proceeding to Phase Two, Is Socrates speaking of just any citizen of just any State? Or is he, as we might gather from the stress placed upon the fact that a certain individual named Socrates has never complained about certain particular laws of a particular State, speaking only of Athens, and certain citizens who have related themselves to Athens in a particular way? These are the questions—we shall not try to answer them for the moment—that the critics responsible for current misunderstandings of the *Crito* have always failed to ask, and we shall have to come back to them in due course. Now as to Phase Two:

One: The Laws of Athens say to the citizens as they come of age: You have seen the ways of our city. You know us well. If you do not like us, you may take your goods and go elsewhere.

Two: The citizen who opts to remain in Athens, once the Laws have addressed him in this manner, in the very act of doing so makes a *contract* with the Laws; he commits himself, through that contract, to obey the Laws, not destroy them; and if, later, he runs afoul of Athenian justice and administration, he is estopped from pleading that they are unjust.

Three: Socrates, upon coming of age, opted to remain in Athens; in doing so, he entered into a contract with the Laws of Athens; he is therefore estopped from arguing that Athenian justice and administration are unjust; if he were to violate the law that requires sentences to be duly executed, and so destroyed the State so far as in him lay, he would be going back

on a contract.

Four: —and here we must attend carefully: The Laws of Athens do not “rudely impose” their commands; *the citizens, including Socrates, are given every opportunity, when they think the Laws to be in error, of “convincing” them.*

Five: Socrates, more than most Athenians, has again and again reaffirmed the contract in question: he never leaves town; he has begotten children in Athens; he has, in the course of his trial, refused a sentence of banishment, electing death in preference to exile; he has, moreover, had seventy leisurely years during which, had he been of a mind to, he might have called the contract into question.

Six: Socrates cannot evade the Laws without going back on his pledged word.

There, in skeletonized and (as I see it) ethically neutral form is the political theory argument of the *Crito*. It does not, be it noted, tell Socrates what he ought to do—can tell him what to do only if, back in that corpus of ethical and theological doctrine that he holds in his left hand, there be a rule as to whether or not a man is obliged to keep his pledged word. Let there be such a rule (“Thou shalt not violate a contract”); let it be made to “preside over” the political theory argument, and the decision not to escape follows as a matter of course; the political theory argument has merely clarified the alternatives between which a choice must be made; and the choice can never be better, however “good” the “will” of the chooser, than the process by which the alternatives are clarified. To which let me hasten to add: The argument does touch on what we today call the freedom of speech issue, and in such fashion as to make it likely that, off at the end, we shall find a teaching here about freedom of speech. We must not, however, leap to any conclusion as to what that teaching is; and our next task must be to examine carefully the sentence that makes it part of the argument. It reads as follows:

thirdly, because he has made a covenant with us [that is, with the Laws of Athens] that he will duly obey our commands; and he neither obeys them *nor convinces us that our commands are unjust*; and we do not rudely impose them, but give him the alternative of [either] obeying or *convincing us*;—that is what we offer, and he does neither.

What, now, are we to make of that sentence? No more but also no less, I think, than the following: It is an ethically neutral “empirical” description of a state of affairs in a particular city named Athens. It specifies the *extent* to which “freedom of speech” obtains in Athens. It is, finally, integral to the argument—in the sense that, when we attempt to visualize the model Socrates has constructed, the model in terms of which, against the background of his ethics, Socrates is to decide not to escape, we must, if we are to be faithful to the text, include it as one of the model’s *characteristics*. And the model, in consequence, takes the following shape:

We have an indeterminate number of “citizens” in a “State” that possesses “Laws”, and the citizens stand over against the Laws in certain relations, which it is the purpose of the model to depict. There is, first, the relation of A who has been engendered by B to B who has engendered him (the citizens are engendered by the Laws, and the Laws engender the citizens). There is, second, the relation of A who has been formed or educated by B to B who has formed and educated him (the citizens are formed and educated by the Laws, and the Laws form and educate the citizens). There is, third, the relation between A who has entered into a contract with B and B who is the other party to the contract (the citizens, in the first instance upon reaching maturity and opting to remain within the city, and every day thereafter by remaining, have contracted with the Laws to obey them, and the Laws have contracted with them to exact obedi-

ence from all citizens). And, fourth, there is the relation between A who is under contract to obey B *but* is in position to remonstrate with B, to complain when he regards B’s commands as unjust, to “convince” B if he have arguments capable of convincing B, and B who is under contract not, in this sense, to “impose” his commands “rudely”, to listen when A complains, to expose himself to being “convinced” (the citizens are allowed to complain and try to convince, the Laws offer them always a choice between obeying *tout court* and trying to “convince,” though with the understanding that, once having failed to “convince”, the citizens are to obey).

That is the model, the full specification of Socrates’ relatedness to the Laws, which renders unavoidable, given Socrates’ ethics, the decision not to escape. The teaching of the *Crito*, taking the ethics and the political theory together, is not then (as we often hear) that all citizens are obligated to obey all States, but that given a certain kind of State, specified in the model, there is on the citizens’ part a crystal-clear obligation to obey. One of the *minima* for that kind of state is, we now perceive, a certain “amount” of freedom of speech. By no stretch of the imagination, however, that amount of freedom of speech that is called for by the simon-pure doctrine; nor let any Liberal critic attempt to bring off any such argument as the following: Socrates is in fact *indicting* the Laws of Athens for having deprived him of the promised freedom to try to convince them. He was in the process of convincing them when he was brought to trial. The trial and the sentence have had the effect of silencing him. The freedom to convince appropriate to the model is therefore being denied to Socrates, and that is the point we are intended to grasp. Let not any Liberal critic, I say, try to bring off that argument, for the following reasons:

1) In order to bring it off, one would have to place an inordinate burden on the

word "convince" in the passage I have quoted. Offering citizens the "alternative of obeying or convincing" is not the same thing as offering each citizen all the time he might like for the attempt to convince; and the most that can possibly be got out of the passage, evidently, is that each citizen is entitled to a "hearing"—to put forward his case fully, and be listened to, on at least one occasion. (Socrates, be it remembered, himself reminds us, for the rest, the fact that he has been pursuing the same line of argument, and been listened to, through several decades. Nor is it possible to point to any textual basis whatever for a supposed claim on Socrates' part that the Laws have not kept their promise to give him a hearing.)

2) In order to bring it off we should have to overburden the word "convince" in a second sense, namely: The talking that got Socrates into trouble did *not* have for its purpose the "convincing" of the Laws concerning the alleged injustice or

wrongness of some particular command or commands; nor does Socrates at any point suggest or imply anything of the kind. On the contrary: he emphasizes that he has made no complaint, over the decades, either about the Laws or—if this be something different—Athenian justice and administration. And the most the Laws are committed to under the contract as stated, is to the hearing of pleas that their commands are unjust.

In a word: the most that can be squeezed out of the *Crito*, as the basis for a commitment to the simon-pure doctrine, is this: the Laws do offer the citizen an opportunity to obey or convince them, and this does constitute a further point in favor of obeying them, as also a further reason for loving Athens. Which is to say: that "amount" of freedom of speech which will enable the Laws to say, "We do not rudely impose ourselves; rather, we give each citizen a reasonable opportunity to con-

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vince us of any alleged injustice on our part"—that amount of freedom of speech, but by no means necessarily any greater amount, is one (but only one) of the goods the good society values, as maintenance of the right of emigration is another. And, in the context of any ethic that requires the performance of contracts, the State that vouchsafes to its citizens that amount of freedom of speech has a better claim to obedience than it would have if it denied them that amount. Nor does it follow that the greater the freedom the better the claim to obedience; that also would be to overburden the text.

We conclude: The *Crito* teaches that the good State, the State that deserves to be obeyed, places a high valuation upon a certain "amount" of freedom of speech. A high valuation, however, is not the same thing as a supreme valuation, which is what Mill demands. And, in any case, the "amount" of freedom of speech in question is evidently meagre by comparison with that required by the simon-pure doctrine. It involves a capacity on the part of the citizen not by any means to think and say whatever he pleases but rather merely to be heard—not necessarily *ad nauseam*, however, or with any prior guarantee that the State will not punish him for believing that which he says while being heard. For the State of the *Crito*, the State for which Socrates claims obedience off at the end, is, clearly, a State that strikes back at the dissident if, after hearing him, it decides that his dissidence is of such character or degree as to warrant punishment. It is, in a word, a State which, like our own when it takes action against the Communists, claims for itself the capacity to put its citizens on notice that they can embrace and communicate certain doctrines only at their own very considerable risk.

Let us return now to that symbol of the Bearer of the Word defying the Assembly, to my assertion that it "lies at the root" of the kind of thinking that produces the simon-pure doctrine of freedom of thought

and speech, and to my further assertion that the genuine symbol, as it emerges from the drama given us by Plato, by no means lends itself to the uses to which the spurious one is forever being put by Liberal doctrinaires. First, however, a word about the latter:

The Liberal proclaims Truth to be his highest value. Press him, however, about his commitment to Truth, and you will find that it is a commitment not to Truth as, say, Milton would have understood that term, but rather to Truth as a shorthand expression for what the Liberal supposes to be the process by which Truth is arrived at, and to a certain view of the history of that process. The moment never comes, according to the Liberal, when man can pause in his search for Truth and say with any confidence: "This truth I know to be *valid*, and beyond possible revision in the light of the new discoveries of tomorrow or the day after." At most, for the Liberal, man progresses a little from time to time in what we may call an *asymptotic approach to Truth*; and the Liberal's mind is haunted with those situations in the past in which, as he believes, man failed to progress in that sense because an individual capable of achieving a nearer approach to Truth was martyred by a multitude. Push him a little harder, and you will discover that he can hardly conceive of a situation in which it is the other way 'round—that is, in which the multitude was "right" in this special sense of the word "right", and the martyred individual "wrong." In the Liberal's history book, in a word, it is always Socrates and the Assembly, always Socrates who is "right" and the persecuting multitude that is wrong. Always, therefore, Socrates must be *saved*, retrospectively and prospectively, from the Assembly, which *ex hypothesi* brooks no disagreement with its "truths", and forever thirsts for the blood of those who presume to disagree with it. If Socrates is *not* saved, the next move forward in the asymptotic approach to Truth must await some happier occasion when he will

be saved, when the Assembly is somehow prevented from spilling his blood, so that—and this is the main point—Socrates can *go on talking*. Snatching Socrates out of the jaws of the Assembly becomes, in consequence, *the* historical imperative for all who would love and serve the Truth. Nay, more: the problem “How order society?” reduces itself to the problem “How save Socrates—*any* Socrates—from the Assembly, that is, *any* Assembly?”, and that, in turn, to the problem, “How make sure that no individual who wishes to say things certain to displease his neighbors will be silenced or, worse still, first be permitted to speak and then be punished for having dared to think that which he has said?” What Liberal doctrinaires propose is, in a word, a state of affairs in which all individuals can go on talking, indefinitely and with impunity, no matter how deeply convinced their neighbors may be that they ought to be silenced, or punished.

The position is, evidently, not without its difficulties: If the approach to Truth is indeed asymptotic at best, if indeed the moment never comes at which any particular truth can be asserted as valid, it would seem to follow that there are no Bearers of the Word. It would appear to follow, too, that the retrospective judgment, “Socrates was ‘right’ and the Assembly ‘wrong,’” is meaningless. Let us, however, not press such points. The difficulties disappear when we remind ourselves that there is for the Liberal one exception to the proposition that Truth always keeps one jump ahead of its pursuers, namely, the axiom “All questions are open questions,” and that the Socrates of Liberal mythology is precisely an exponent of that axiom. In a word: All questions are open questions save the question whether all questions are open questions, which is—and always has been—a closed question; Socrates *believed* that; and sense can therefore be made of the assertion “Socrates was right and the Assembly, which believed that some questions are closed ques-

tions, was wrong.” And my next task is to direct the reader’s attention to what I have called the genuine symbol, as it emerges from the drama given us by Plato, and to do this by bringing together those emphases that the creators of the spurious symbol have ignored. Namely:

1) The Socrates of the *Apology* deliberately drives a wedge between himself and those who believe that Truth always keeps a jump ahead of us. His accusers, he says, “have scarcely spoken the Truth at all;” from *him*, he hastens to add, the Athenians “shall hear the whole truth.” Precisely what is wrong, he insists, is that the Assemblymen have permitted purveyors of falsehoods to take possession of their minds; and precisely the grounds on which he demands to be heard and refuses to be silenced are that he has *exposed* the purveyors of falsehoods: “Their pretence of knowledge has been detected — *which is the truth!*”

2) Socrates thinks of himself as a man with numerous enemies, which is perhaps consistent with the spurious symbol; but these enemies are, early on at least, not so much the rank-and-file of his neighbors as the powerful and the influential. “I went,” he relates, “to one who had the reputation of wisdom,” and “I tried to explain to him that he . . . was not really wise; and the consequence was that he hated me, and his enmity was shared by several who were present and heard me.” Socrates does not, however, mend his ways, as another man might have done with a view to avoiding a future clash in the bosom of his society: “Then I went to one man after another, becoming conscious of the enmity which I provoked, and it distressed and alarmed me.”

3) Socrates well understands, again from an early moment, the process that will lead finally to his own execution — understands it, refuses to lift a finger in order to arrest it, becomes therefore the conscious creator of the state of affairs that leads to his death. (In Rousseau’s phrase,

he wills his own punishment not merely there at the end, when his neighbors attempt to force him to be free, but early days as well; that is, he wills the resentment that leads to the forcing.) "I made bitter enemies, and this will be my destruction if I am destroyed: . . . [The] envy and detraction of the world, which has been the death of many good men, and will probably be the death of many more; there is no danger of my being the last of them." Or again: ". . . [Do] not be offended at my telling you the truth; for the truth is that no man who opposes you or any other crowd, and tries to prevent the unjust and illegal acts which are done in the state, will save his life."

4) Far from denying the charge that he has influenced the young men of the city, Socrates pleads himself guilty to it, and concedes that they have become bearers of the word he bears: ". . . young men of the richer classes, who have most leisure, come about me of their own accord; they like to have the pretenders examined, and they often imitate me, and proceed to examine others." And, *mirabile dictu*, "then those who are examined by them are angry with me."

5) Socrates, better perhaps than any other commentator we have except Dr. Johnson, understands why societies cannot adopt, with respect to the propagation of opinions that it deems immoral, the policy that, centuries later, Mill is to enjoin upon them: "The good," he says, "do their neighbors good, and the evil do them evil." Or again: "If a man with whom I have to live is corrupted, . . . I am very likely to be harmed by him."

6) Insofar as the issue at stake between Socrates and the Assembly concerns Truth, it concerns *religious* Truth not the jump-ahead-of-the-pursuer "scientific" truth of the Galileos (nor, I might add in passing, is there any phenomenon of our day that wants more meditating about than the pains taken by our professors of philosophy to explain away the religious passages in the Dialogues of Plato). "[If] you say to me,"

he tells the Assembly, "if you say to me, Socrates, . . . you shall be let off, but upon one condition, that you are not to inquire and speculate in this way any more, and that if you are caught doing so again, you shall die — if this was the condition on which you let me go, I should reply: Men of Athens, I have the warmest affection for you; but I shall obey God rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy." Nor, let us notice, is he willing for the issue between himself and the jurors to disappear from sight, to be "smoothed over": "[Are] you not ashamed of devoting yourself to acquiring the greatest amount of money and reputation, and caring so little about wisdom and truth and the greatest improvement of the soul, which you never regard at all? . . . [This] I shall do to everyone, . . . citizen and alien. But especially to the citizens, inasmuch as they are my brethren. For know that this is the command of God; and I believe that no greater good has ever happened in the State than my service to God. For I do nothing but go about persuading you all . . . not to take thought for your person or properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul. . . . This is my teaching, and if this is a doctrine which corrupts the youth, I am a mischievous person." There are, in other words, teachers and teachers; some teachers are "mischievous"; and the question "What teachers are mischievous?" is (*pace* accepted opinion in our own day concerning academic "freedom") neither silly nor improper.

7) Socrates is no more willing to soften the issue at stake between himself and the Assembly than he is to "smooth things over": what he demands of the Athenians is not the correction of this or that particular wrong or injustice, but a drastic change in their entire way of life — a change, moreover, that cannot become a matter of "negotiation" or "compromise," because it is commanded by God. The

Athenians must not "sin against God by condemning me, who am his gift to you . . . I . . . am a sort of gadfly . . . which God has attached to the State, and all day long and in all places am always fastening upon you, accusing and persuading and reproaching you." And again: "When I say that I am given to you by God, the proof of my mission is this: if I had been like other men, I should not have neglected all my own concerns . . . during all these years, and have been doing yours . . . [that is], exhorting you to regard virtue." Still again: ". . . [This] duty of cross-examining other men has been imposed upon me by God, and has been signified to me by oracles, visions, and in every way in which the will of divine power was ever intimated to anyone. This is true, Athenians, and easy to test."

8) The Assembly does *not* think of itself as knowing all the answers: It listens patiently to Socrates as he pleads his case, finally decides his fate by a vote of 280

to 220. "Had thirty votes gone over to the other side," Socrates points out, "I should have been acquitted." In countering Meletus' proposal for a death sentence, Socrates "imprudently" and "arrogantly" (the adverbs are from Richard Livingstone, who writes out of deep animus against the Assembly) suggests that he be voted a reward — maintenance at the Prytaneum no less. The Assembly might fairly have been expected to strike back at him for his "imprudence" and "arrogance", but the most Livingstone can permit himself to say is that "it was naturally annoyed, and the verdict of death was brought in by an increased majority." In the interval between the two votes, moreover, Socrates insists even more sharply than before upon the distance that separates him from his accusers, and from the minds his accusers have captured: ". . . [If] I tell you that [to hold my tongue] would be disobedience to God, and therefore that I cannot hold my tongue, you will not believe that

SHENANDOAH

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I am serious; and if I say again that daily to discourse about virtue . . . is the greatest good of man, and that the unexamined life [that is, the life led by the jurors] is not worth living, you are still less likely to believe me."

9) Far from being just any individual refusing to be silenced by just any multitude, Plato's Socrates is "right" because the Word he bears is *true*, and is true because it is a *divine gift*. Plato's Assembly, similarly, is "wrong" because it rejects the Word, not because it refuses to declare all questions open questions. Socrates, indeed, is calling upon it to declare closed a whole series of questions that, by condemning him, it elected to leave open. Why? Because, as our excerpts show, the truth of which Socrates is the Bearer is *revealed truth*, and its acceptance as revealed truth would have placed it beyond challenge.

10) The drama Plato unfolds for us is, as it seems to me, projected upon two levels, and these must be sharply distinguished if we are to comprehend the teaching he is urging upon us. We have, first, the compassionately told story of the failure of a divine mission — in which, I submit, the point being insisted upon by the dramatist is the sheer inevitability of the failure. Socrates possesses the truth of the soul, and *must* try to communicate it to his neighbors. His neighbors reject it, but at no point does Plato imply that they were capable of doing other than rejecting it, or that the chasm that divides them from Socrates could conceivably have been bridged. It is, to an astonishing degree, the same story as that of the Gospels, with the same teaching (whether we have it from the lips of the teacher or from those of the narrator is, evidently, a matter of indifference), "Forgive them, . . . for they know not what they do." And precisely what stamps the spurious symbol as spurious is that it is the creation and the tool of men who have *not* forgiven the Athenians. (Plato, who cannot know that the chasm between teacher and neighbor can be bridged by the Atonement, must —

unlike the narrators of the Gospels — leave it at that.)

As for the second level of which I speak — the literature concerning the *Apology* seems to me, in general, to have overlooked the first and misunderstood the second — our dramatist is posing for us, as I read him, a problem of an entirely different character, namely: What, abstracting from our own knowledge of the divine character of Socrates' mission, was the issue at stake between Socrates and the Assembly as that issue must have appeared to the Assembly itself, and what does *political theory* have to learn from the Assembly's handling of that issue? Here, as in the *Crito*, Plato gives us a model, a paradigm of a constantly recurrent political decision that, if societies are to make it wisely, must be grasped on the level of ethically neutral political theory. And the model's *characteristics* are these:

1) Socrates, in the eyes of the Assemblymen, is a *revolutionary agitator* — not by any means the first they have ever had to deal with, and not by any means the last they will have to deal with. Socrates calls upon them to abandon their way of life, to cease concerning themselves with such trivialities as bread-winning and glory, and devote themselves to discourse about virtue.

2) Socrates rests his demand for a revolutionary change in the Athenians' way of life upon the most offensive grounds he could possibly have chosen: their present way of life is "not worth living."

3) Socrates, by way of driving home the worthlessness and pointlessness of the Athenians' way of life, strikes out at them on their most sensitive point, namely, their confidence in the men they most respect and admire: he seeks out these men and, with other Athenians looking on, proves — to his own satisfaction anyhow — that they possess neither of the two qualities the Athenians attribute to them, namely, wisdom and virtue.

4) Socrates surrounds himself with a

group of young men who "imitate" him. How many? The Athenians cannot be sure. How do the young men imitate him? Precisely by insisting that the minds of the Athenians have been "captured" by "false teachers."

5) Socrates insists that he *has* to be a revolutionary agitator. There is an "inner voice" that leads him on. He is, as we have noted, acting under divine command, and would be guilty of disobedience to God if he did not call the Athenians' attention to the worthlessness of their way of life. The Athenians must, moreover, take his word for the divine character of his mission: when they demand of him a sign that he is a gift from God, all he can do is point to his poverty.

6) Socrates refuses to discuss any *modus vivendi* with the Athenians, even when they make clear to him that they are weary of being button-holed and "re-

proached"; it seems never to occur to him that he is hurting the Athenians' feelings, or being tiresome.

7) Socrates' teachings are incomprehensible to the Athenians; in order to grasp them, the Athenians would have to challenge all the axioms on which they have been brought up. Worse still, Socrates appears to equate any attempt to cling to their axioms with, simultaneously, viciousness and stupidity.

8) Socrates seems to be trying to make fools of the Athenians, to prove to them that the worse cause is the better.

There is the model, no detail of which, presumably, is there by accident: it catches up, paradigmatically, the situation of every society over against every revolutionary agitator; nor could there be better evidence of the poverty of post-Platonic political theory than the fact that it has received

In Dry Weather

In dry weather,
When pears turn leather
And zinnias paper,
The red, red reaper
Dust-dreams. A wrinkle
Of rind, a-tinkle
With seeds, is the melon.
The noon-hot bell on
The barn announces
(Its clanging bounces
Off the tin gable)
That dinner's on table.
Who will come, steaming?
The farm boys—from swimming
In the warm wet of
The creek, a pet of
Theirs panting after
Boys and their laughter,
And fierce all about
Them sun, a bronze shout.

JOHN NIXON, JR.

so little attention. It remains, I think, merely to ask what alternatives, in the sphere of political decision-making, it clarifies for us, what light it throws upon Plato's teaching, and, above all, what, in the context of it, we are to make of the implicit demand, on the part of those who traffic in the spurious not the genuine symbol of Socrates and the Assembly, that the Assembly permit Socrates to go on talking.

The Assemblymen have, clearly, three alternatives open to them. First, to silence Socrates, which they can do only if they are prepared to eliminate him if he refuses to be silenced (as refuse he must). Second, to proceed forthwith to make the changes in their way of life that Socrates the revolutionary agitator demands of them. Third, to "tolerate" him. Amongst these alternatives, as we know, they chose the first, and have been held in contempt ever since (by persons who deem themselves their intellectual and moral betters, and do not hesitate to sit in judgment upon them) for *not* having chosen the third, *but*, curiously as I see it, have been let off rather lightly for not having chosen the second. Why curiously? Because, with Plato's model in front of us, the comment that leaps to the mind is this: Save to the extent that the Athenians are prepared to contemplate the second alternative (that is, carry out the revolutionary changes Socrates demands), they can embrace the third alternative only by renouncing the only responsibilities they could conceivably recognize as *their* responsibilities. And for at least two reasons: First, to tolerate Socrates — remember those young men who imitate him — is to run the risk that the revolution that can now be prevented by deliberate choice shall, off in the future, take place because those who desire it are at last powerful enough to impose it, which is an eventuality whose acceptability had just as well be faced now as later, and second because, in any case, Socrates will not (*vide* the model) let the Athenians merely tolerate him. Because he is the revolutionary agitator *sans pur*, he will

seize upon his toleration as a lever for bringing about his revolution, and *he* will at every moment translate our third alternative into an embryo of the second alternative.

It is, of course, with good reason that no-one calls upon the Athenians, retrospectively, to embrace the second alternative, and our model tells us why. The Athenians are running a *society*, which is the embodiment of a *way of life*, which in turn is the embodiment of the *goods* they cherish and the *beliefs* to which they stand committed. The question "What are *our* responsibilities?" can have no other meaning for them than "What must we do to preserve this society and its way of life, its goods, its axioms, its 'values'?" The most we can possibly ask of them, we who possess a paradigmatic model of the way in which societies operate, is that they shall keep their minds a little open to proposals for this or that improvement in their way of life, this or that refinement that — Plato makes room for such refinements in the ideal state of the *Laws* — will enable their society's way of life to become, increasingly, itself at its very best. To ask of them, by contrast, that they jettison their way of life, that they carry out the revolution demanded of them by the revolutionary agitator, is to demand that they shall deliberately do that which they can only regard as irresponsible and immoral — something, moreover, that they will seriously consider doing only to the extent that their society has ceased, or is about to cease, to be a society.

Now: these same considerations, I contend, oblige the Athenians not only to refuse Socrates' program, but to refuse, also, to tolerate Socrates. They cannot tolerate him on the grounds that all questions are open questions because the very question at issue, whether their way of life is worth preserving, is for them a *closed* question, and became a closed question the moment the Athenians became a society. They cannot tolerate Socrates on the grounds that

he is harmless because, for one thing, he has followers who may, if he keeps on talking, become more numerous tomorrow, and may become sufficiently numerous the day after tomorrow to take over, and destroy the Athenian way of life out of hand. For them to let Socrates go on talking, given his ability to fascinate youngsters who know no better than to be convinced by him, is to *court* that danger, and that is no less irresponsible and immoral than to carry out Socrates' revolution themselves. (They share with Socrates, as we have seen, at least one belief, namely: "if a man with whom I have to live is corrupted, . . . I am very likely to be harmed by him.") In a word: the Athenians can tell themselves Socrates is harmless only if they regard him as completely ineffective. And this, as the model tells us, they cannot possibly do. If, therefore, they fail to silence Socrates, they in effect endorse his revolution.

They elected not to do so. They rejected the (for you and me) noble alternative Socrates was urging upon them. If in doing so they turned their backs on God himself, we must learn to forgive them, and to keep ourselves reminded that they faithfully performed the duties attaching to their stations as they, necessarily, had to understand those duties. It would — so the model teaches us — be foolish, nay meaningless, to demand more of them than that. The way of life they sought to preserve was, for the rest, a valuable second best to the way of life Socrates wished them to adopt, and thus worth preserving, and, what is perhaps more in point, a realistic possibility, which Socrates' way of life was not. It had nurtured Socrates. It had nurtured Plato himself, and Crito, and the rest of the 220. Perhaps a second-best but eminently worthwhile task for political theory is to try to learn to build — and preserve — so good a city.

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